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ELEVEN

SERMONS

Preach'd upon

Special Occasions,

By the Late Reverend

Mr. JOHN PIGGOTT,

Minister of the Gospel.

Being all that were Printed in his Life-time.

Together with

Mr. PILKINGTON's Recantation of the Errors of the Romish Church, as 'twas publish'd by Mr. PIGGOTT.

To which is added,

Mr. PIGGOTT's Funeral Sermon, preach'd by Mr. JOSEPH STENNETT: Containing some Account of his Life and Character.

LONDON,

Printed by JOHN DARBY in *Bartholomew-Close*, for NATH. CLIFF and DAN. JACKSON at the Bible and Three Crowns in *Cheapside*, and JONAS BROWNE at the Black Swan without *Temple-Bar*. M.DCC.XIV.

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A Good King and his People, the ſpecial Care of Heaven.

A

SERMON

Preach'd *April* 16. 1696.

Being a Day of

Publick Thankſgiving,

For the Diſcovery and Defeat of the late Deteſtable Conſpiracy againſt His Majeſty's Perſon, and of a Deſign'd Invaſion from *France.*

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To the Right Honourable

CHARLES

Earl of MONMOUTH, &c.

My Lord,

Should not have preſum'd to inſcribe ſo Great a Name in the Front of ſo mean a Diſcourſe, had not your Lordſhip's Signal Loyalty to his preſent Majeſty King William, *your conſtant Zeal for the Liberties of* England, *and your extenſive Candor to all True Proteſtants, conſpir'd to encourage the Attempt.*

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For as our Late Common Deliverance, by the merciful Providence of God, was the Occaſion of this Sermon; ſo I perſuade my ſelf your Lordſhip is too much affected with this great Bleſſing, to be diſpleas'd at the weakeſt Effort that any one can make, with a ſincere and honeſt Deſign to celebrate it.

That your Lordſhip and your Noble Family may enjoy the Bleſſings both of this Life, and of that which is to come, is the earneſt Prayer of,

(My Lord)

Your Lordſhip's

very Humble and

Obedient Servant,

JOHN PIGGOTT.

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A

Thankſgiving Sermon

ON THE

Diſcovery of the Late PLOT.

PSAL. cxliv. 10.

It is He that giveth Salvation unto Kings: who delivereth David *his Servant, from the hurtful Sword.*

I Preſume that upon the very reading theſe Words, you are convinc'd that they are not unſutable to the Work of this Day; who are here before the Almighty, to acknowledg that he hath eminently given Salvation to our *King*, and hath miraculouſly deliver'd him from *the hurtful Sword*; by bringing to light the hidden Works of Darkneſs, by baffling and

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defeating the late barbarous Conſpiracy of wicked Men to aſſaſſinate his Royal Perſon, and to rob his Subjects of their eſtabliſh'd Liberties, by encouraging and aſſiſting an Invaſion from *France*.

Eſpecially conſidering that this Pſalm, of which my Text is a part, is thought to have been compos'd after the Death of *Saul*, and in the beginning of *David*'s Reign. Whenever it was, it certainly follow'd ſome extraordinary Deliverance, which *David* had receiv'd, and does in the Text, acknowledg to be given by a ſpecial Hand of God: and it is not improbable that it was in the beginning of his Reign; for tho *David* was at firſt anointed by a ſpecial
1 Sam. 16. 12, 13. Command of God, (while *Saul* ſway'd the Scepter of *Iſrael*) to ſignify that God had choſen him to govern his People, and that upon *Saul*'s Death he was immediately to fill up the Throne, yet after he was anointed King over the Houſe
2 Sam. 2. 4. of *Judah*, it was a long time before he ſubdued the Rebellions of thoſe that adher'd to *Iſhboſheth*
Ver. 8. the Son of *Saul*, who made ſome Pretences to the
Ver. 9. Crown, and was accordingly aſſiſted by *Abner* the chief Captain of *Saul*'s Hoſt, and ſo made King over *Gilead*, and over the *Aſhurites*, and over *Jezreel*, and over *Ephraim*, and over *Benjamin*, and over all *Iſrael*, except *Judah*, as the next Verſe informs us, *ver.* 10. *But the Houſe of* Judah *followed* David.

So that the greateſt part of the firſt ſeven Years of *David*'s Reign was ſpent in the Fatigues of a hazardous War; hazardous it muſt needs be, when he had rebellious and unnatural Subjects at Home, and cruel Enemies Abroad. Yet God was pleas'd by his remarkable Protection and Defence, to diſappoint wicked Men in their Deſigns againſt him. Which

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Which occaſions him in the beginning of the Pſalm to expreſs his grateful Reſentments in ſuch Words as theſe: *Bleſſed be the Lord my Strength, who teacheth my Hands to war, and my Fingers to fight: My Goodneſs and my Fortreſs, my high Tower and my Deliverer, my Shield and He in whom I truſt; who ſubdueth my People under me.*

q. d. I diſclaim all glorying in my own Prudence and Conduct, and deſire to give the entire Praiſe of my Succeſs and Victory to him that hath *girded me with Strength unto Battel:* who has *cauſed thoſe to bow under me that roſe up* Pſal. 18. 39. *againſt me.* The Counſels of mine Enemies have been baffled by the Wiſdom of God, and their Armies ſcatter'd by Him who is the Lord of Hoſts.

God has eminently been my Deliverer, for he hath ſaved me from thoſe *whoſe Mouth ſpeaketh* Ver. 8. *Vanity, and whoſe right Hand is a right Hand of Falſhood.* In which Deſcription of his Enemies he plainly intimates they were ſuch as paid no deference to Truth or Juſtice, to Honour or Religion: It refers to the Cuſtom of the Jews, who when they ſwore lifted up their right Hand towards Heaven; and when they enter'd into a Covenant with Men, to ſignify their Conſent, they gave one another the ſame Hand: *Their right Hand is a right Hand of Falſhood*; they are Men that can break in upon their own Covenants, and violate their Oaths to God; Treachery and Cruelty compoſe their Character.

And how juſtly this ſame Deſcription may be affixt to our Enemies, I need not ſay; ſince we all underſtand the Language of a Deſpotick and Arbitrary Power, which in the late Reign made great Advances againſt our Civil Rights, and a-

gainſt our Religion too: And as for *Lewis* the 14*th* of *France*, the Aſhes of the Proteſtants demoliſhed Temples, the Blood of their ſlaughtered Innocents, both in *France* and in the Vallies of *Piedmont*, are enough to make his Name for ever to be condemn'd in Hiſtory, as being one of the moſt barbarous Sons of Violence and Blood. Now a Deliverance from ſuch Enemies as theſe, did ſo awaken the Gratitude of *David*, that he cries out, *I will ſing a new Song unto thee, O God:* as if he had ſaid, I will not alienate from my great Deliverer that Tribute of Praiſe that is his rightful Due. Then followeth the Text, *It is He that giveth Salvation unto Kings; who delivereth* David *his Servant from the hurtful Sword.*

Ver. 9.

Which Words will furniſh us with theſe two general Heads of Diſcourſe:

I. That the Salvation and Victory that good Kings obtain, is given them of God.

II. That it is by a ſpecial Providence of God that righteous Kings (and conſequently the People under their Government) are delivered from the miſchievous Deſigns and Plots of evil Men.

I ſay *righteous Kings*, becauſe my Text ſaith, David *thy Servant*; and I add theſe words, *from the miſchievous Deſigns and Plots of evil Men*, becauſe my Text ſays, *from the hurtful Sword*; *i. e.* from the deſign'd Miſchiefs of the hurtful Sword, which was to take away the Life of the Innocent.

I

I begin with the first of these, namely;

That the Salvation or Victory that Good Kings obtain, is given them of God.

All that I shall say to this Observation shall be only to prove it, that I may make the better way to the second, which I design (God willing) principally to speak to.

For the Proof of this first Observation, see the 9 *Eccles.* 11. *I return'd and saw under the Sun, that the Race is not to the Swift, nor the Battel to the Strong*, &c. A swift Runner may tire in a Race, and come last to the Goal; and a strong Army miss of Victory, for Success in War does not always ensue upon vast Preparations, and a mighty Force.

So that sometimes the most unlikely Undertakings succeed well, when the most probable and best-laid Designs are defeated and broken. And how is this brought about, but by the Finger of God? Who as he hath *made*, so he also *governs* the World, and gives Success and Victory to whom he pleases; to whom we may say, as King *Asa* in his Prayer, 2 Chron. 14. 11. *Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with Many, or with them that have no Power.*

God hath sometimes given a Defeat to a numerous Army by visible Miracles. Need I instance in that amazing Check that the proud King of *Assyria* met with in the Overthrow and Ruine of his Army by an Angel, who slew an hundred fourscore and five thousand in one Night? Or need I tell you of the Wonders God wrought in *Egypt* for his People; or what a Deliverance he gave them at the Red-Sea?

This

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This Doctrine that I am now upon was so well understood by *David*, that he frequently renounced any Dependance upon an external Force: *There is no King* (says he) *saved by the Multitude of an Host: A mighty Man is not deliver'd by much Strength.* And in the 44th *Psal. 6. I will not trust to my Bow, neither shall my Sword save me.*

Psal. 33. 16.

And this is yet further confirm'd by *Solomon*, *Prov.* 21. 31. *The Horse is prepar'd against the Day of Battel: but Victory is of the Lord.*

To whom but to God could the Victory of *Gideon* over a very numerous Army be ascribed, when the Clattering of Pitchers, the Sound of Trumpets, the Light of Lamps, and the united Cry of 300 Men, [*The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon*] discomfited a Mighty Host, and caused every Man's Sword to be against his Fellow? But what need I run so many Ages back, when there have been so many Instances within our Memory, to confirm my Observation?

Judg. 7. 2. & 22.

Particularly the late Glorious Revolution by the Undertaking of the then Prince of *Orange*, the present King of these Realms. How did all things concur to bring about our Deliverance from Popery and Arbitrary Power?

When we saw no way of escaping, how did God dispirit the Army of the late King, which on a sudden was struck with such a Pannick Fear, that those that went not over to our Deliverer were scattered in the greatest Disorder, like Men under the visible Effects of the highest Consternation and Fear?

So that our Deliverance advanc'd towards us with incredible Swiftness, and was, beyond all Expectation, obtain'd with little or no expence of Blood.

We

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We were not exalted to our Happineſs upon the Graves of our Friends, or the Aſhes of our Dwellings. And are not all theſe the indelible Characters of the Divine Hand? To cloſe this Head: To whom, but God, ſhall we attribute his Majeſty's Succeſs in the Reduction of *Ireland*; and ſince, in ſeveral Conqueſts and Victories, both by Sea and Land, and particularly the Succeſs of the laſt Campaign? But I have ſaid enough to this firſt Obſervation.

Obſerv. 2. That it is by a ſpecial Providence of God, that righteous Kings and their People, are deliver'd from the miſchievous Deſigns and Plots of evil Men. In diſcourſing on this Argument, I ſhall attempt theſe three things.

I. To tell you when we may look upon a Deliverance, from a Plot againſt a good King and his People, to be by a ſpecial Providence of God.

II. Aſſign ſome Reaſons, why God Almighty, by his ſpecial Providence, does at ſome times deliver a righteous King and his People, from the miſchievous Deſigns and Plots of evil Men.

III. Make ſome Uſe ſuitable to the Solemnity of this Day, and that Deliverance for which we are aſſembled to praiſe God.

I. I am to tell you, when we may look upon a Deliverance from a Plot againſt a King and his People, to be a ſpecial Providence of God.

1. When

1. When Men of great Policy and Skill, that are engag'd in such Plots, are seiz'd with a Spirit of Giddiness, being inclin'd to follow that Advice that in all probability will weaken the Attempt, and lay open the whole Conspiracy.

How often hath God turn'd the Counsels of Plotters against themselves? For He, in whose hands are the Hearts of all Men, hath made some of them that were big with the Designs of his Peoples Ruin, empty themselves in their own Confusion.

Guilt has been legible in their Countenances, and thro the Infatuation of their Counsels, they have served the * Interest they design'd to overthrow. And as the Lord turn'd the Heart of the King of *Assyria* unto the *Jews*, to strengthen their Hands in the Work of the House of God, *Ezra* 6.22. so he does frequently turn the Counsels of his Enemies to the Service of his Church; and their Policies are so baffled by the Spirit of Wisdom, that they meet with nothing but Disappointment and Shame. As in *Herod*'s Plot against the Life of our Lord, who fearing that he would rival him in his Throne, forms a Design to murder him. And altho *Herod* was a Man of very great Craft and Subtilty, yet in this Conspiracy his Sagacity seems to be revers'd; (according to that of the Prophet, *Isa.* 44. 25. *He turneth Wise-men backward, and maketh their Knowledg Foolishness*) and he acts directly repugnant to all the celebrated Maxims of Policy; for altho he knew that the Wise-men had seen Christ's Star in the East, and were going to worship him, yet he never thinks of sending his Guards with them, or going himself in a

* *As appears by the present National Association, which was occasioned by the late Conspiracy.*

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Religious Disguise, which according to Human Probability might have effectually brought about the Barbarous Design. But what could he do? The Hand of God was against him, and he acts like one under the Power of Infatuation; for he sends these Wise-men to search diligently for the young Child, and entrusts them to bring him word where he might go and worship him. Surely never Prince acted more against the Rules of Policy! to depend upon the Notice of those Men, whose Persons he knew as little of, as their Studies; and of whose Kindness, Constancy and Fidelity, he had less Assurance than of either: they came from a far Country, some say from *Susa* in *Persia*, others from *Arabia Felix*; the former is about 920 Miles, the latter above 1240.

Quos Jupiter vult perdere hos dementat. Mat. 2. 8.

Now, I say, that he should trust such as these, to me is an inconteſtable Evidence that he was seized with a Spirit of Giddiness and Infatuation, and that God by a special Providence render'd his abominable Design abortive; especially when I consider that the wise Men were warn'd of God in a Dream that they should not return to *Herod*, and that accordingly they departed into their own Country another way; while *Joseph* is warned by an Angel in a Dream to take Jesus and his Mother, and flee into *Egypt*: all which contributed to give a total Defeat to *Herod*'s black Design against the Life of our Lord.

Mat. 2. 12. Ver. 13.

Alas! Men are sometimes under such disorder within, by an Influence over-ruling all their Designs, that they cannot take the most rational Advice that is given them.

As

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As in the Plot against *David*; *Achitophel*, like a politick Minister of State, gave very proper Advice (humanly speaking) to *Absalom* to bring about the Assassination of his Father:

1 Sam. 17. 1, 2. For *Achitophel* said unto *Absalom*, *Let me now choose out twelve thousand Men, and I will arise and pursue after* David *this Night; and I will come upon him while he is weary and weak-handed, and will make him afraid, and all the People that are with him shall flee, and I will smite the King only.*

You see the Design was to come upon *David* suddenly, when his Forces were dispers'd and scatter'd abroad, and could not easily be alarm'd; which seems to be somewhat like surprizing King *William*'s Guards, and attacking him in his Winter-quarters.

Whether our late baffled Conspirators took their Politicks from him, I know not; sure I am they met with no better Success.

But to proceed; Notwithstanding the seeming Rationality of *Achitophel*'s Advice, *Absalom* declines the taking of it, and chooses rather to receive the Counsel of *Hushai*, which did not look half so probable, as you may see from the *7th* Verse to the *14th* of the same Chapter: So that *David* might well cry out in the Words of my Text, *It is God that giveth Salvation to Kings, and delivereth* David *his Servant from the hurtful Sword.* For by God's infatuating their Counsels, *David* and his People were deliver'd from mischievous Designs and Plots.

Now what shall we say when God maketh the Diviners mad, and disappointeth the Devices of the Crafty, so that their Hands cannot perform their Enterprize? Shall not we confess that it is by a special Providence of God that all this is done?

2. Then

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2. Then may the Deliverance of a King and his People be ascrib'd to a special Providence of God, when the deep-laid Design is uncover'd, and the black Project brought to light, by some unaccountable Means.

Such an Instance we have of a special Providence of God towards the *Jews*, in defeating that execrable Conspiracy that was formed against them by *Haman*, who was prime Minister of State under *Ahasuerus*; and being affronted by *Mordecai* the *Jew* in that he refused to do him Reverence, was resolv'd to revenge it not only on him, but upon the *Jews* in all the King's Provinces; and having (no doubt) very frequently insinuated, that they were a factious and disloyal People, and great Enemies to *Ahasuerus*'s Government and Empire, it seems by what follows, he was not a little confident that the King would grant his Request, and that the many thousands of *Jews* that were dispers'd through the Emperor's Dominions, should be offer'd up as an entire Victim to his Ambition and Rage: for in the *7th* Verse 'tis said, *That in the first Month*, (that is, the Month *Nisan*) *in the twelth Year of King* Ahasuerus, *they cast* Pur, *that is the Lot, before* Haman *from Day to Day, and from Month to Month, to the twelfth Month, that is the Month* Adar. Esth. 3. 2.

To understand which Words, you must consider that in those Eastern Countries the People before they undertook any considerable Enterprize, cast Lots for a lucky Day.

Thus did *Haman* in his Conspiracy against the *Jews*, cast *Pur* for a lucky Day to begin his bloody Work upon, which happened upon the *13th* Day of the *12th* Month, which is called

led *Adar*; which according to modern Computation anſwers to our *February*, the 15*th* of which was fix'd upon for the Aſſaſſination of our King: as if God Almighty would ſignify by his Providence, that in all the voluminous Records of Time, there was never any Inſtance of a Plot came ſo near that which we have lately eſcaped, as this remarkable one in ſacred Story.

Now *Haman* having advanced the Matter thus far, leſt the King ſhould ſcruple to ſign the Warrant for the Maſſacre, ſince by ſo doing he would loſe a conſiderable Revenue, by taking off ſuch a vaſt Body of his Subjects, he
Ver. 9. offers to return into the King's Exchequer ten thouſand Talents of Silver: what Talents they were is ſomewhat uncertain, ſome think the Sum might be about two Millions of Mony Sterling; but be it more or leſs, the King is content, takes off his Ring from his Hand, and gives it to *Haman* to ſign the Warrants that were to be iſſued out for the Execution of the *Jews*. *Haman* having received the Privy-Seal, ſhows his Activity; for he preſently calls for the Secretaries of State, that they might
Ver. 12. write his Pleaſure to the ſeveral Officers of the Militia in the Kingdom, to the King's Lieutenants, and Governours of every Province, that they ſhould deſtroy, kill, and cauſe to periſh all *Jews* both young and old, little Children and Women, in one day, *&c.* and this Order was diſperſt into every Province by a ſwift Poſt.

And that thoſe to whom this Order came, might do the work the more effectually, they
* *As were the* Iriſh *in the late Reign.* are promiſed to have the Spoil for a * Prey, that they might be the more ſevere, and that their

their covetous Deſire might prompt them on to an univerſal Slaughter. But as a Prelude to this Tragical Day, (which 'twas hop'd would be very lucky) *Haman* faint with the Thirſt of Blood, reſolves to take off *Mordecai* firſt, and accordingly ſets up a Gallows of 50 Cubits high: probably that he might be expoſed as a Spectacle of Contempt to a numerous Croud.

But the very Night before the Morning that *Mordecai* was to die, the King could not ſleep, *Eſth.* 6. 1. and inſtead of the ordinary Diverſions of the Court, calls for the Records of his Empire; and the Perſon that was to read them, was, doubtleſs by the ſpecial Providence of God, guided to that place in thoſe Chronicles, that reported an eminent Service *Mordecai* had done ſome time before, in diſcovering a Plot againſt *Ahaſuerus*'s Life.

The King immediately enquires whether *Mordecai* had ever been rewarded; and finding he had not, inſtead of being hang'd the next Morning, is made to ride in Triumph through the Streets of the City, while *Haman* his potent Enemy is forc'd like a Lacquey to attend his Horſe of State. Ver. 2.

Thus God by an unaccountable Turn of Providence, daſhes the Deſign of *Haman*, and his Plot proves abortive; and by another Turn as ſtrange as the former, *Haman* is forc'd to leave his Court-Preferments, to be lifted up upon a Gallows of his own erecting: for in the 9th of *Eſther* 1. we read, *that in the twelfth Month, (that is, the Month* Adar) *on the thirteenth Day of the ſame, when the King's Commandment and his Decree drew near to be put in Execution, in the Day that the Enemies of the* Jews *hop'd to have power over them, (tho it was turned to the*

contrary, that the Jews *had Rule over them that*
Ver. 2. *hated them)* —— *no Man could withſtand them, for the Fear of them fell upon all People.*

Thus are the Wicked ſometimes taken in the Devices they imagine; in the Net which they hid is their own Foot taken. Their Miſchiefs return upon their own Heads, and their violent Dealing comes down upon their own Pate.

Joſephus relates, that *Caligula* having a Deſign to vent his bloody Rage on the *Jews* for refuſing him Divine Honour, was, by a domeſtick Sword, preſently forc'd to reſign his revengeful Breath. And 'tis the Obſervation of one, that the *Perſian* Nobles incenſing the King againſt *Daniel*, did occaſion his growth in Favour, together with their own Deſtruction.

Thus in the ſeveral Ages of the Church hath God by the moſt unaccountable Methods deliver'd righteous Kings, and their People, from the Plots of wicked Men; particularly the Deliverance we praiſe God for this Day was brought about, by Means as im-
Eccl. 10. 20. probable as if a Bird of the Air ſhould tell
Hab. 2. 11. the Matter, or the Stones in the Walls of a ſeditious Conventicle ſhould cry out *Treaſon.*
* Pender-graſs. How was * one of our Enemies bow'd by an inviſible Hand, to make a Diſcovery of the wicked and black Deſigns of others of them! as *Balaam* bleſs'd *Iſrael*, when he had more mind to curſe 'em. Nay, ſeveral of our late Conſpirators (it ſeems) were ſtruck with ſome kind of terrible Apprehenſions at the Thoughts of that Execrable Villany they were in a little time to commit; and have ſince fallen proſtrate at the Feet of that Prince, whom they deſign'd to have laid at theirs. Does not this Delive-

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Deliverance then bear the Character of a *ſpecial Providence of God?*

3. We may then aſcribe a Deliverance of King and People to a ſpecial Providence of God, when after the Enemy hath advanc'd his Deſign near to Execution, a ſeaſonable and ſudden Diſcovery is made.

When the Enemies of God are promiſing themſelves undoubted Succeſs, how opportunely are their Meaſures ſometimes broken, and their Deſigns defeated?

Pharaoh reſolving to purſue and overtake, and divide the Spoil, and ſaying his Luſt ſhould be ſatisfied; inſtead of meeting with the Sweets of Revenge, is overtaken with the Bitterneſs of Death, and the *Iſraelites* are as it were ſurpriz'd with Salvation.

Thus Myſtery *Babylon*, in the *Revelation*, is repreſented as being ſuddenly ſurpriz'd by the Judgments of God, while ſhe was priding her ſelf in the Grandeur of her State. Rev. 18. 7.

And the Pſalmiſt, to ſhow the Speciality of Divine Providence, in his Deliverance from the bloody Deſigns of *Saul*, repreſents God riding towards him upon a Cherub, and flying upon the Wings of the Wind; to denote how ſwiftly and ſeaſonably he came for his Succour and Help. And thus God hath done for our King and us; when ſome like Sheep were appointed to Slaughter, and others deſtin'd to Slavery, then ſuddenly he interpoſes by a ſpecial Providence, and prevents the deſign'd Miſchief: he prevented us by the Bleſſings of his Goodneſs; and when he turn'd back our Captivity, we were like thoſe that dream, (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks:) for our Deliverance was ſo ſurprizing and ſudden, that Pſal. 126. 1.

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we were like Men awak'd out of Sleep, forc'd to pauſe a while, being inſtantly tranſported with ſilent Wonder! Our Enemies were like *Jehu*, driving on furiouſly, but ſuddenly their Chariot-Wheels drop off, and they are ſtop'd: ſo that we may ſay with the Prophet, *Iſa.* 64. 3. *Thou didſt terrible things which we look'd not for, thou cameſt down, and the Mountains flowed down at thy Preſence.*

O the unlooked for, unexpected Diſcoveries that God hath made for our Safety, and our Enemies Confuſion! How amazingly hath he laid open that which had lain concealed in the thickeſt Darkneſs! all things were prepared and ready: In what a Poſture was the late King to make his Deſcent, ſeeming only to wait for the Signal, which, bleſſed be God, none had the Opportunity of giving! For by the ſeaſonable Interpoſition of the Divine Providence, a Diſcovery was made; and juſt as the Enemy was coming in upon us like a Flood, Iſa. 59. 19. the Lord lifted up his Standard againſt them. Pſal. 124. 2, 3 So that well may our *Engliſh Iſrael* ſay, *If God had not been on our ſide when Men roſe up againſt us, they had ſwallowed us up quick.*

O how has God baffled the Confidence of Man, and let him ſee that no Weapon form'd againſt his *Zion* ſhall proſper!

How has he ſnatch'd us from the very Jaws of Death! how have our Souls eſcap'd as a Ver. 7. Bird out of the Snare of the Fowler! To what ſhall we aſcribe our Deliverance, but to his ſpecial Providence who hath helped us right early?

4. That Deliverance is by a ſpecial Providence of God, that is eminently ſerviceable to his People.

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As ſurely all will confeſs that our preſent Deliverance is likely to be, but the Bigots of the Roman Faction, and thoſe who are ſcarce a Remove from them; I mean ſuch as can abſolve Men dying under the Guilt of the blackeſt Crimes, without any Tokens of Remorſe.

How dreadful had been the Condition of all the Proteſtants in *Europe*, if He that had ſo ſucceſsfully vindicated and ſecur'd their Rights, ſhould have been barbarouſly Aſſaſſinated? But how much worſe had it been with us, (even ſuch of us as might have ſurviv'd the Fatal Blow) who muſt have exchang'd our Liberties and Laws, for the Uſurping Tyranny and Slavery of *France*; and inſtead of ſinging this Day, the Tears of our Widows and Fatherleſs Children, might have been mixed with the Aſhes of our City, and our Streets floated with a Stream of Human Blood?

5. Then we ought to aſcribe the Deliverance, *&c.* to a ſpecial Providence of God, when it is a direct Anſwer of our Prayers, as this Salvation and Deliverance muſt be acknowledged to be.

How often have we in this Place pray'd that God would defend his Majeſty's Perſon againſt ſecret Plots and open Violence, and that the Angels of God's Preſence might encamp round about him? To which we have had ſo viſible a Return in his Majeſty's Preſervation, and in the Diſcovery of this Execrable Plot againſt his Life and Government, that without incurring the Suſpicion of Enthuſiaſm, we may conclude our Prayers are anſwer'd, and have great Reaſon to cry out with *David*, *Now we know that the Lord ſaveth his Anointed, and will hear him* Pſal. 20. 6.

from his holy Heaven, with the ſaving Strength of his Right hand.

Therefore let us chearfully own that God hath anſwer'd our Prayers, and never ceaſe to offer them to him for the good Conduct of his Majeſty's Counſels, the farther Succeſs of his Victorious Arms, and the Preſervation and Proſperity of his Royal Perſon; that his Reign may be proſperous, and his Days many; and that when he has finiſhed Time, he may leave his Government upon Earth, to reign with Chriſt in Heaven. *Let the King*

Pſal. 21. 1, 2. *joy in thy Strength, O Lord, and in thy Salvation let him greatly rejoice: for thou haſt given him his Heart's Deſire, and hath not with-holden the Requeſt of his Lips.*

I now proceed, in the ſecond place, to offer ſome Reaſons why God Almighty by a ſpecial Providence do's ſometimes deliver a good King and his People from the Plots of evil Men.

And 1. He does ſo, that he may the more remarkably advance his own Glory, that all the Inhabitants in the World may ſee what his Hand hath wrought. The Glory of God is the Supreme End of all his Diſpenſations, but eminently ſo in thoſe ſignal Deliverances, which can be aſcrib'd to no other Cauſe but a ſpecial Providence of Heaven.

For if nothing elſe can claim a Share in our Deliverance, 'tis a horrid Alienation of the Divine Right, to with-hold any part of the Glory from God.

His Deſign is to appropriate the entire Glory of ſpecial Providences to himſelf: and one great Reaſon of ſuch eminent providential Appearances, is to render his Divine Attributes the

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the more illustrious in the World. For as one Star differs from another in Glory, so a distinguishing Salvation by a special Providence differs from a common Protection, in that the former renders the Perfections of the Deity bright and flaming, while the latter doth but obscurely discover them.

The one makes them conspicuous to every Eye, when the other seldom makes them fall under common Notice.

Now God by his special Acts of Providence designs to augment the Tribute of his Praise, and to advance his Honour so high that all may see it. *Jehovah* is jealous of his Honour, and cannot bear any Competitor; he will not give his Glory to another, nor his Praise to Graven Images.

For as his Wisdom, Goodness, Faithfulness and Power are eminently seen in National Deliverances by special Acts of Divine Providence, so in return for them he expects a large Revenue of Praise.

2. God delivers good Kings and their People by such special Acts of his Providence, that they may be the more deeply affected therewith, and the better relish the Deliverance wrought for them. What God has done in this late Deliverance, is to awaken all the Powers of the Rational part of Man, and to engage them intensly in the Work of Praise.

Had God Almighty stifled this Plot at first, and prevented its being drawn out to so prodigious a Length, and so near to Execution as it was, we should not have been so affected with the Deliverance, as now when his set time to favour us was come. Psal. 102. 13, 14.

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For 'tis moſt likely, that when ſurpriz'd with Salvation even on the Borders of Ruin, and the Confines of Death, we ſhould beſt reliſh ſo great a Mercy, and be deeply affected with ſo ſignal a Deliverance.

3. God delivers by ſpecial Acts of his Providence, that he may cure the Remainders of his People's Infidelity, and engage them to truſt in him for the future.

Tho our Character as Chriſtian ſignifies our
John 14. 1. *believing* in the *Father* and the *Son*, and ſome of us can ſay, *Lord we believe*; yet we muſt alſo
Mark 9. 24. add, *Help thou our Unbelief.*

Who of us but finds a mixture of Infidelity within, that makes very ſtrong Efforts againſt the Impreſſions of Faith?

Now a ſeeming delay in the bringing about an expected Providence, does ſuddenly occaſion a miſconſtruction of the Methods of Divine Love; and thereby a very ſteddy Believer is without much difficulty weaken'd and ſhaken in his Confidence.

Nay, after the moſt ſignal Appearances of God, we are apt, like the *Iſraelites*, to call in queſtion the Divine Goodneſs and Power, as the
Pſal. 78. 9. Pſalmiſt remarks; *They ſaid, Can God furniſh a Table in the Wilderneſs?* A very unreaſonable Queſtion, when God had done ſo many *marvel-*
Ver. 12. *lous things* for them *in their Sight, in the Land of* Egypt, *in the Field of* Zoan: *Dividing the Sea,*
Ver. 15. *that the Waters ſtood as an Heap; leading them by a Cloud* in the *Day*, and conducting them by a
Ver. 16. *Fiery Pillar* in the *Night*. Yet notwithſtanding all theſe aſtoniſhing Inſtances of Omnipotence and Love, they *believ'd not in God*, neither *truſted*
Ver. 22. *in his Salvation*. They had conſiderable remains of Unbelief, though they liv'd in an Age of Miracles.

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Miracles. And how apt the People of God have been in every Age to relapſe into Infidelity after his moſt marvellous Appearances, has been too notorious and viſible either to be cover'd or excuſed.

Therefore one great End of God's condeſcending to appear for our common Safety, is to cure this Diſtemper of our Minds, and to engage us ſteddily to truſt in him for the future; that we may *truſt in the Lord*, after having found that *in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting Strength:* A Strength that can never be waſted by Age, nor enfeebled by the Gates of Hell. *For the Name of the Lord is a ſtrong Tower, the Righteous runneth into it and is ſafe.* By the Name of God we muſt underſtand either God himſelf, or thoſe Perfections of the Deity that are eminently diſplay'd in the Government of the World, upon which we are entirely to lean, in expectation of Safety and Conduct, preſent and future; which we have good ground to hope for, if we make him the *Object* of our Truſt, who has been the *Cauſe* of our Salvation. *For they that truſt in the Lord ſhall be as Mount* Zion, *which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.* Prov. 19. 10. Pſal. 125. 1.

But before I paſs this Head, I would inſinuate that we are not to truſt in God, ſo as to exclude the Uſe of Means. I would not have you imagine, that by truſting in God, I mean we are to ſit ſtill and do nothing; for tho we are not to truſt in Chariots and in Horſes, and in a numerous Hoſt, yet we have no reaſon to expect our Enemies Defeat without them, unleſs we were aſſured of it by ſome extraordinary Revelation from God: for our Swords are not yet beat into Plow-ſhears, nor our Spears into Pruning-hooks; we are ſtill to make uſe of Inſtruments

of

of War, and to use the best Conduct that we can; yet after all, entirely to trust in our God, and to believe that he that has deliver'd, will still deliver and save his People.

4. God is pleas'd thus to act, to convince his Enemies that he is not only Rector and Governour of the World in general, but that he do's by special Acts of Providence guard and defend his Church.

The successive Events of Time are disposed of by the Divine Order and Permission; and *the most High ruleth in the Kingdoms of Men*, Dan. 4. 17.

There is not any thing in this lower World that is brought about by a blind inflexible Destiny, (as some Heathens fancied;) or depends upon the Uncertainties of Chance, as others of 'em dream'd: for, says the Psalmist, *The Lord* Psal. 103. 19. *hath prepared his Throne in the Heavens, and his Kingdom ruleth over all.* He is in the actual Exercise of an universal Dominion and Empire over Angels and Men. 'Tis not only the exalted Order of Seraphs, and those other bright Spirits above, that were never sullied by Sin, who are under the Conduct of God, but every Creature under Heaven is govern'd by the same Lord. Indeed some of the Heathens denied God's governing Providence in general, whilst others of 'em acknowledg'd it but in part; for tho they would own that he took care of the great Affairs of Kingdoms and Nations, yet they thought it unbecoming the infinite Perfections of a God, to give so remarkable a Stoop, as to take notice of particular Persons and Things. But we Christians, who are guided by a more certain Light, are well assur'd that *the Ways of Man are before the Eyes of the* Prov. 5. 21. *Lord*,

Magna Dii curant, parva negligunt. *Cic. de Nat. Deor.*

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Lord, and he pondereth all his Goings: And as *Solomon* ſays in another place, *The Eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the Evil and the Good.* He do's not ſit in the Heavens, viewing what is done upon Earth as an idle Spectator, but governs by his infinite Wiſdom what he has raiſed from nothing by his unlimited Power; and that he does ſo, is notoriouſly viſible in thoſe Deliverances that can be aſcribed to no other Cauſe than what is Divine. Prov. 15. 3.

For who, taking notice how all things concurred to prevent the Murder of our King, and an Invaſion from *France*, but muſt be forced to cry out, Surely there is a God that judgeth in the Earth, who is very much concern'd for the Happineſs of thoſe whom he owns for his People? Particularly how did the obſequious Winds, by the Direction of the Lord of the Univerſe, ſubſerve to our Protection, and to the Diſappointment of our Enemies? The Divine Providence having thereby kindly laid an Embargo on our Fleet, contrary to the ignorant Wiſhes of our Merchants, that we might be ready to defend our ſelves, and prevent the intended Deſcent of our Enemies.

God expects when he appears ſo viſibly, that all ſhould *regard his Work, and conſider the Operation of his Hands*; who ſays concerning his Church, *Iſa.* 27. 3. *I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment: leſt any hurt it, I will keep it Night and Day.* Which Promiſe has been eminently made good in the Diſcovery of the late Plot. And one great End of God's defeating the Machinations of evil Men, is to let all ſee the ſpecial Regard he has for his Church: *For the Eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole Earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in the behalf of them whoſe Heart is perfect towards him.* 2 Chron. 16. 9.

5.

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5. He delivers by ſuch ſpecial Acts of Providence, that they may remain a laſting Terror to the Wicked in all after-Ages. As ſpecial Acts of Providence carry in them viſible Tokens for Good to the People of God, ſo they bear amazing Characters of Terror to the Enemies of his Church. 'Tis to be hop'd, it will not a little weaken the Power of our Adverſaries, to look back upon their baffled Policies; that which was formerly an Occaſion of their Glorying, will probably hereafter adminiſter to their Confuſion and Terror. *He that ſitteth in the Heavens ſhall laugh: the Lord ſhall have them in Deriſion. Then ſhall he ſpeak unto them in his Wrath, and vex them in his ſore Diſpleaſure.* It will be a diſtracting Perplexity to the Wicked, and a great enfeebling of their Strength, to be forc'd to remember how God hath appear'd againſt them, and blaſted their black Conſpiracies againſt his Church. How will the Revolution of ——88, and the Diſcovery of this Plot in——96, remain to Poſterity a Subject of Shame and Trouble to the whole Romiſh Party? and one would think (if they have any grains of Modeſty left, or are at all capable of reflecting on the Hand of God, which has ſo eminently appear'd againſt them) they ſhould ſcarce ever dare to touch God's Anointed more, or attempt the Ruin of his Church. However, he can make the Wrath of Man to praiſe him, and reſtrain the Remainder thereof if he pleaſes.

Pſal. 2. 4, 5.

1 Chr. 16. 22.

Pſal. 76. 10.

III. I ſhall cloſe all with ſome Uſe ſutable to the Solemnity of this Day, and that Deliverance for which we are come together to praiſe God. 1. If

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1. If our King and we have been deliver'd by a ſpecial Providence of God, (as 'tis evident we have) what reaſon have we to be abaſed and humbled, that we are no more affected with ſo great a Deliverance, and that our Return bears no better a proportion to the merciful Providence we are under? Surely we have abundant Cauſe to mingle our Tears with our Songs, that the great Deliverance we enjoy has had ſo little Influence upon us! Is there not as much Profaneneſs in our Streets, as much Carnality and Lukewarmneſs in our Churches as ever? Do we not ſtill continue in our old Sins, after ſuch a new and aſtoniſhing Deliverance? What can we expect ſhould follow on ſuch Stupidity and Ingratitude, but that that God who has broken the Snare for our Deliverance, and ſet our Feet in a large Place, ſhould give us the Reverſe of our Happineſs, and deliver us into the hands of our Enemies, unleſs we repent? We read in 1 *Kings* 11. 9. that *the Lord was angry with* Solomon, *becauſe his Heart was turned from the Lord God of* Iſrael, *which had appeared unto him twice.* The double Appearance of God in an extraordinary way, did highly aggravate his Apoſtacy and Revolt from him: And what Shame and Confuſion of Face belongs to us, whom God has loaded with his repeated Benefits, ſince we have made no Returns ſutable to them? And except we thorowly humble our ſelves, what can we expect, but that God will be angry with us till he hath conſum'd us, ſo that there ſhall be no remnant nor eſcaping? Pray obſerve what follow'd upon the Ingratitude of *Hezekiah*, 2 Chron. 22. 25. *But* Hezekiah *render'd not again, according to the Benefit done unto him; for his Heart was*

lifted up; therefore there was Wrath upon him, and upon Judah *and* Jeruſalem.

2. Hath God Almighty by a ſpecial Act of Providence deliver'd our King and us his People from the hurtful Sword? Let ſuch a Mercy never be forgot, but tranſmitted to Poſterity. May the Characters of this Deliverance never be defac'd by Time, but its Memory be kept alive and freſh in Generations to come; that the Children that are yet unborn, who probably will enjoy the Advantages of it, may hereafter praiſe God for it, and declare it to their Children. Let us not be like the *Iſraelites* of old, who ſang God's Praiſe, but ſoon forgot his Works. May the Circumſtances of this wonderful Salvation add a ſprightly Accent to the Hallelujahs that ſhall be ſung for it, to the utmoſt Limits of Time; that the Memory of this Mercy may live as long as the Sun and Moon endure. 'Tis remark'd by a learned Man, that the City *Shuſhan*, the Royal Seat of the *Perſian* Monarchy, was pourtrayed on the Eaſt Gate of the Temple, that the *Jews* might readily recognize and call to remembrance the wonderful Deliverance of *Purim*, which was wrought in *Shuſhan*, Eſth. 9. 26. Has God Almighty delivered our King and us? let us hope in him, and never forget his Benefits.

Pſal. 78. 6.

Pſ. 106. 12, 13.

Dr. Lightfoot's *Temple*, ch. 3.

3. As Heaven hath ſignalized *WILLIAM*, our LAWFUL and RIGHTFUL Sovereign, by repeated Acts of ſpecial Protection; let us, who profeſs to be his obedient Subjects at all times, afford him the moſt viſible Tokens of a ſincere and ſignal Loyalty. 'Tis true, he has been engaged for ſome time in a War very expenſive, but it has been for our Safety, and in the hazard of his own Life: and ſhall we regret

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regret the parting with a little of our Eſtates, to keep out a dreadful War from the Bowels of our Country, and for the Defence of our Lives and Liberties? 'Tis not many Years ſince, that we would have given the two Thirds of what we had, that the other Part might have been ſecur'd to us. Therefore let us not murmur at our preſent Expence, becauſe it is to ſupport the Intereſt of a Proteſtant King, whom a continued Deliverance from ſucceſſive Dangers has mark'd out for the Darling of Providence; a Prince in whom meets the Prudence and Courage of all his renown'd Anceſtors; and whom not to value and eſteem, would be to ſlight the God that hath girded him for Battel. Judg. 8. 34, 35.

4. Let us chearfully and cordially praiſe God for our common Deliverance, a Deliverance ſo great, that we lack Words to ſet it out to the full; for it is big with Mercy, I had almoſt ſaid, with Miracle! Who but muſt confeſs, that the Finger of God was in it, and that the Signatures of a ſpecial Providence are deeply impreſs'd upon it! And ſhall not we with the moſt exalted Vigour of Mind praiſe God for ſuch a Deliverance as this, that has in ſome reſpects hardly any Precedent or Parallel? Let us all beware that we never provoke him by freſh Provocations to throw off his Care, to remove the Candleſtick of his Goſpel, and give us up as a Prey into their Teeth, whoſe tender Mercies are Cruelties. For know, that our God will not always be at the Charge of Miracles for our Preſervation, if we remain in the Practice, and under the Power of our Sins: for if inſtead of Repentance and Reformation, we are multiplying our Tranſgreſſions

ſions againſt Heaven, they may in a ſort contribute towards another Plot. In a word, let no unſeemly Folly or Exceſs caſt a Blemiſh on our Thankſgiving-Day: Nay, let our whole Lives, as well as our Lips, praiſe our great Deliverer; and let us not ceaſe to ſpeak of the Glory and Honour of his Majeſty, and of his wondrous Works, and to declare his Glory among the Heathen, his Wonders among all People. Let us ſing forth the Honour of his Name, and make his Praiſe glorious; for ſurely what we rejoice in, *is the Lord's Doing*, and ought to be *marvellous in our Eyes.*

To cloſe all; Let our Aſſemblies ring with ſinging of God's Greatneſs, and praiſing his Power, that the Heavens may eccho back again, *It is God that giveth Salvation to Kings*, and hath ſaved *WILLIAM his Servant from the hurtful Sword.*

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A

Funeral Sermon

Upon the ſad Occaſion of the

DEATH

OF

Mordecai Abbott Eſq;

Preach'd *March* 17*th*, $\frac{1699}{1700}$.

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To the Mournful Relict of *Mordecai Abbott*, Esq;

MADAM,

THE following Sermon, which was compos'd in a little time, and when a great many other things of importance lay on my hands, had never been expos'd to publick View, had not You more than once pres's'd it upon me, from the Affection I bore to your deceas'd Husband, my very worthy and most agreeable Friend; whose Name will be ever dear to me. But tho I am conscious it has many Defects, yet being design'd to celebrate his Memory, I thought my self bound by the Laws of Friendship, as well as the Obligations of Duty, to inscribe it to your Name, from whom I have receiv'd the most liberal and undeserv'd Favours. And tho it may in some sort renew your Sorrows, yet I hope,

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with the Bleſſing of God, it will tend to reſtrain 'em from Exceſs.

Madam, *You have all the Aſſurance, that you can have in this World, of your late Conſort's Happineſs in the next; he having only chang'd your pleaſing, but temporary Society, for the endleſs Felicities of* Abraham's *Boſom.*

He has run his Chriſtian Race, and receiv'd his unfading Crown: he has paſs'd thro an ill-natur'd World with an unſpotted Name; for Envy it ſelf could not ſtain his Character.

May his Virtues live in his Childrens Memory, and his Example in their Lives: May all the tender Branches of your hopeful Family become Plants of Renown; may they tread in their Father's Steps, and ſerve their Father's God: And that You, dear Madam, may long continue with 'em, to awe and guide their Youth, and to ſhed the Influences of your Virtues among 'em, is the unfeign'd Deſire of,

MADAM, Your very Humble
and Oblig'd Servant,

JOHN PIGGOTT.

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1 THESS. iv. 13, 14.

But I would not have you to be ignorant, Brethren, concerning them which are aſleep, that ye ſorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

For if we believe that Jeſus died and roſe again, even ſo them alſo which ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him.

THE melancholy Air that ſits on every Countenance, and the ſad Solemnities that attend our meeting at this time, give ſufficient Intimation of what I am come about: I need not tell you that it is to preach a Funeral Sermon, and whoſe Death has given me the ſorrowful Occaſion; for the deceaſed Gentleman's Worth was ſo well known, and the want of him is ſo much felt, that the Court, the City, and the Church of God are not a little ſenſible who it is that is raviſh'd from them.

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This ſudden and ſurprizing Providence repreſents the Frailty of Human Nature, and the neceſſity of an early and conſtant Prepa-
1 Cor. 7.31. ration for the other World: *For this World and the Faſhion of it paſſes away.* Its Glory and Inhabitants vaniſh in the twinkling of an eye. Lord, how vain a thing is Man! how little is he to be accounted of, ſeeing his Breath is in his Noſtrils, and may be ſtopt by a thouſand Accidents, and his Soul let out at the leaſt Pore of his Body!

Yet ſo great is the Stupidity that has ſeiz'd on the World, that moſt People are for putting the evil Day far from 'em, as only fit to be thought on by the Sick and the Aged: tho they know not what a Day may bring forth; and tho they cannot but be inform'd by the Records of the Grave, that there are more drop into it in their full ſtrength, while
Job 21. 24. their *Bones are moiſtned with Marrow*, than there are that arrive to a good old Age before they make their Bed in darkneſs.

Indeed there are none ſo wretchedly ſceptical as to deny, or disbelieve that they are mortal, or that ſeriouſly think they ſhall never go to the Houſe appointed for all living: yet the generality of the World live as if they were never to die: and I confeſs of the two, it ſeems to me a greater inſtance of Madneſs and Folly, to think we ſhall die, and not prepare for it, than to imagine we are immortal, and ſo uncapable of dying. So that upon the whole, a Man cannot give a better Evidence of true Wiſdom, than by making his Preparation for Death the great buſineſs of his Life; for Death we are ſure will come, but at what time we know not:

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not: therefore 'tis the most reasonable thing in the World that we should be always ready.

I little thought that he who was worshipping of God in this place this day month, would so soon have sunk down to the Dust of Death; and indeed God only knows which of us shall take the next turn to the Sepulcher. I know 'tis impossible to mention this, but there will be a very strong Emotion in most Minds; to calm which, a recourse to my Text is the most proper Remedy that I know of.

For I would not have you to be ignorant, Brethren, &c.

'Tis not improbable but that the Death of some Persons in the *Thessalonian* Church might occasion St. *Paul* to address himself to the Survivers (as in the words of the Text) that he might arm 'em against the Fears of Death, and moderate their excessive Mourning for the Dead. In the words I observe these three Parts;

I. The Apostle's extraordinary care to inform the *Thessalonian* Christians concerning the State of their dead Friends: *But I would not have you to be ignorant, Brethren, concerning them that are asleep;*

II. A Dissuasive from immoderate Sorrow, upon the Death of those that are pious; *That ye sorrow not even as others that have no hope.*

III. The Arguments the Apostle uses to prevent excessive Mourning for the dead in Christ. The first is taken from the nature of their Death, 'tis described under the soft Character of a Sleep. The second is fetch'd from what shall follow this Sleep; they shall be awaken'd in the morning of the Resurrection: *Those that sleep in Jesus, will God bring*

with him. Which the Apoſtle not only aſſerts, but proves: *For*, ſays he, *if we believe that Jeſus died and roſe again, q. d.* if there be any ſolid reaſon for our believing the Death and Reſurrection of Chriſt, then we have an infallible aſſurance of the revival of all that die united to him: *Thoſe that ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him.*

I ſhall briefly treat of theſe three General Heads, and then make ſome Application ſuitable to my Text, and the ſolemn and ſad Occaſion of diſcourſing from it.

I. The Apoſtle's extraordinary care to inform the *Theſſalonian* Chriſtians concerning the ſtate of their deceaſed Friends: *But I would not have you to be ignorant, Brethren, concerning them which are aſleep.* Thoſe words ſeem to import, that the Apoſtle apprehended divers of theſe Chriſtians to be under ſome miſtakes with reſpect to their dead Friends: And 'tis thought that their Perſecutors had ſhock'd 'em in their Faith about the Reſurrection of the Body. For we know, that the *Greek* Philoſophers, as well as the *Sadduces* among the *Jews*, did explode and ridicule this great Doctrine; which they perform'd with ſo much Art and Subtilty, that ſome Members of the Primitive Church doubted, whilſt others affirm'd there was no Reſurrection. And this ſeems to be the occaſion of their exceſſive Sorrow, they looking upon their dead Friends not only as remov'd out of the World, but as loſt for ever (as to their Bodies at leaſt.) And their Perſecutors, that they might increaſe their Infidelity and their Sorrow at the ſame time, when they put the Chriſtians to

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to death for the Cauſe of Chriſt, did it in ſuch ways, as might have the appearance at leaſt of deſtroying and annihilating the Matter that compos'd their Bodies: Sometimes committing 'em to the Flames, and ſcattering their Aſhes in the Air and in Rivers, that their ſurviving Friends might conclude it was impoſſible they ſhould ever riſe again: At other times they were devour'd by wild Beaſts, or elſe thrown as a Prey to the Fiſh of the Sea; and all this to ſuppreſs the Belief of the Reſurrection.

Now whether theſe Enemies to the Chriſtian Doctrine did imagine by theſe Methods to annihilate the Matter of the Human Body, or ſo to ſcatter or confound theſe Particles of Duſt, as to render it impoſſible for God to recollect and range 'em in their due Place and Order, ſo as to compoſe the ſame Human Body; 'tis equally abſurd. The former is very unphiloſophical, for 'tis impoſſible by any method in the World to annihilate Matter: indeed its Form may be deſtroy'd, and it may receive a variety of new Figures; it may be differently modified ten thouſand times, but cannot be annihilated by the Arts of any Creature under Heaven. With reſpect to the latter, 'tis impious and atheiſtical, for it ſuppoſes a defect either in the Knowledg or Power of God, or both; which is as vain as to ſay, there is no God: for we cannot frame a becoming Idea of a Deity, without conceiving him clothed with every Perfection, and as poſſeſſing of 'em infinitely. So that allowing there is ſuch a Being as God, that is Omniſcient and Almighty, 'tis as rational to believe he can recollect theſe diſperſed Atoms again, as unite 'em in their firſt Production. For all things are poſſible to God,

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who can, if he pleaſe, impreſs a kind of natural force upon the diſunited Parts, and cauſe 'em to move to one another, as readily as the filings of Iron to a Loadſtone, tho mingled with millions of Particles of Sand.

The infinite Knowledg, together with the irreſiſtible Power of God, anſwers all Objections againſt the Reſurrection of the Body; the ſame Being having plighted his Faithfulneſs for this Event, promiſing that the Dead ſhall be raiſed. And this is one great Doctrine which St. *Paul* in the Text aims to ſet in a clear and certain light, that the *Theſſalonians* who ſeem'd to be ſhaken, might be confirm'd in their belief of this important Article of the Chriſtian Creed: *Brethren, I would not have you to be ignorant concerning them that are aſleep—— for them that ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him: q. d.* 'Tis true, your Friends are fallen aſleep, but 'tis not an eternal one, for they ſhall be awaken'd from it; they are dead, but they ſhall revive and riſe again, for God our Saviour ſhall bring them with him, when he comes in the Clouds of Heaven. Here I might make ſeveral very profitable Remarks upon the Apoſtle's care to correct and remove the Miſtakes thoſe Chriſtians had imbibed to whom he wrote, but my time will not ſuffer me to ſtay upon this Head. I proceed therefore to the

II^d General, which is a diſſuaſive from immoderate Sorrow upon the death of thoſe that are pious. *I would not have you to be ignorant, Brethren, concerning them which are aſleep, that ye ſorrow not even as others that have no hope.* The deſign of theſe words is very obvious, *viz.* to temper our Grief, to regulate and bound

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our Sorrows for those religious Friends that are snatch'd from us by Death. St. *Paul* does not dissuade from all kind of Mourning, but from that which is excessive; a moderate Sorrow is due to the Memory of our deceased Friends.

And we find some, whose Characters shine brightest in the Scripture-History, under a Cloud of Sorrow, when their Relations have been remov'd by Death; yet 'tis no where, that I know of, charg'd upon 'em as a Crime, that they wept for the Dead. *Abraham*, who has an honourable mention among the Old-Testament Worthies for his great Self-denial, as well as the strength of his Faith, in being ready to offer up his only Son at the Divine Command; yet gave a vent to his Grief, and pour'd out a flood of Tears, when *Sarah* the Delight of his Eyes was taken away with a stroke: *And* Abraham *came to mourn for* Sarah, *and wept for her.* Gen. 23. 2.

And *Job*, that Mirror of Patience and Probity, that had none like him in the Earth, as God himself testifies to Satan, yet, as we read, *rent his Mantle, shav'd his Head, fell upon his face to the ground*, when he heard of the death of his Children; these were the Ceremonies then in use as the signs of a deep mourning: yet we are told, *that in all this he sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.* Job 1. 7. Ver. 20. Ver. 22.

But that Instance which is best suted to my purpose, and free even from the suspicion of a Crime, is that of our Blessed Saviour, who tho never guilty of the least Excess, yet joins with the *Jews* in their Sorrow for *Lazarus*: for when he saw *Mary*, and those that attended her, weeping for her dead Brother, the Text says,

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John 11.33. ſays, *he groaned in the Spirit, and was troubled*; but when he came nearer to the Grave, his Grief flow'd out at his Eyes, for the Bleſſed Ver. 34. Jeſus is ſaid to have *wept*. Now whatever might be the occaſion of his Grief, whether his love to *Lazarus*, or the *Jews* Infidelity, or any other reaſon, 'tis plain that thoſe who ſtood about the Grave took it in the firſt ſenſe; there- Ver. 36. fore they preſently cry out, *Behold how he loved him!*

Thus you ſee from the brighteſt Examples in Scripture, that a moderate Sorrow for the Dead is allowable. Moreover, let me remark, that the contrary Carriage under the loſs of our Friends would look like a Contempt of the Divine Hand; for as we are not to faint under the Rebukes, ſo we are not to deſpiſe the Chaſtening of the Lord. The Wiſe-Man tells us, Eccleſ. 3. 4. that there is a time to mourn and a time to weep, as well as for other things; certainly it cannot be an unfit ſeaſon to weep, when God takes away our pious Friends, that have been eminently uſeful, and publick Bleſſings to a Nation. And 'tis obſervable how the Prophet complains of the groſs Stupidity of the *Jews*, who were inſenſible under the ſigns of the Di- Iſa. 57. 1. vine Diſpleaſure; *The righteous periſheth, and no man layeth it to heart.* And we find alſo that 'tis threaten'd as a Judgment, when any die Jer. 22. 18. without being lamented; yea, 'tis ſaid to be Job 27. 13, 14, 15. the *Portion of the wicked from God, and the Heritage of the Oppreſſor, that they are cut off, and their Widows ſhall not weep.* So that upon the whole 'tis very evident, that St. *Paul* in my Text has no deſign, in his Diſſuaſive from immoderate Sorrow, to recommend the Stoical Apathy: for the Rules of the Chriſtian Inſtitution have

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no tendency to eradicate our Passions, but to correct and govern 'em.

And here I cannot but remark, that what has been said casts no favourable Aspect on the Doctrine of the Stoick Philosophers, which teaches that Men are to stifle all natural Affections both of Joy and Sorrow; that no outward Emoluments should move the Affection of Joy: and that a Person should be as easy and as free from the Passion of Grief in a violent Paroxism of the Gout or Stone, as if he were in perfect health in the midst of the most ravishing Delights. 'Tis reported of *Possidonius* a Stoick Philosopher, who passed a great part of his Life under very acute Diseases, that being visited by *Pompey* at *Rhodes*, he entertain'd him with a Philosophical Discourse; and when his Pains were the most sharp and violent, he chid 'em in such Language as this: * *In vain dost thou assault me, Pain; tho thou art troublesome, thou shalt never force me to confess thou art evil.* Indeed could the Pomp of words abate our painful Sensations, there would be some shew of Reason in this Philosopher's method; but since the contrary is evident by universal Experience, 'twas an instance of great Pride, and the most ridiculous Folly. And 'tis worth remarking, that the greatest Masters in this Philosophy, when they fell into sharp Adversity, suddenly sunk into such deep Despair and Impatience, that they laid violent hands upon themselves. I need only name *Cato* and *Brutus*, the most eminent among 'em, " who (as one observes) professing " themselves to be wise in their Speculations, " became Fools in Practice, and were confoun-

* Nil agis, dolor; quanquam sis molestus, nunquam te esse confitebor malum.

" ded

" ded with all their Philoſophy, when they " ſhould have made uſe of it." Which brings to my mind a Paſſage I have read of *Seneca*, who was not a little inclin'd to the Stoick Philoſophy; who tells us, that at the death of his dear Friend *Annæus Serenus*, he* was found of the number of thoſe whom Grief overcame. Upon which, one remarks; " That Nature was too " ſtrong for his Philoſophy, tho at other times " none out-braves the Misfortunes of Life, or " the Terrors of Death at a higher rate, as if " they had not the leaſt power to move his " wiſe Man." So that upon the whole we ſee the Inſufficiency of Philoſophick Axioms to ſupport a Mind overwhelm'd with Sorrow. But that which Philoſophy has vainly attempted, Divine Revelation has fully compleated and finiſh'd; as will be evident, when I conſider the Arguments St. *Paul* uſes in the Text to diſſuade from mourning as thoſe that have no hope.

But before I touch upon them, I muſt be a little more particular in this other matter. I have already told you what kind of Sorrow for the Dead, the Scripture indulges; but that which is without hope, you ſee our Text condemns. Now our Mourning may fall under this Character;

Firſt, When 'tis exceſſive in the Meaſure and Degree.

Secondly, In the Length and Continuance.

Firſt, When 'tis exceſſive in the Meaſure and Degree; as it may be deem'd.

* *Epiſt.* 63. Inter exempla eorum fui quos dolor vicit.

I. When

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1. When our Sorrows are vented in impatient Murmurs and indecent Reflections upon the Conduct of Divine Providence; as if when our Friends are taken from our Society, God had done an unjuſt, an unmerciful, or an unwiſe Act. This is very criminal; for hereby we affront him in his moral Perfections, and ſeem to diſpute with him about the Rights of his Godhead; forgetting that he is our abſolute Sovereign, and has an original and unalienable Right in us and ours. For as it was merely an Act of his Choice to give us a Being, all his ſubſequent Bounties can have no other Original than his own good Pleaſure. And ſince he beſtows his Favours upon us without our Merit, he may juſtly, when he pleaſes, recal 'em without our leave; for his fundamental Right in us and our Friends, skreens him from the leaſt ſhadow of Injuſtice, when by Death he removes them from us. So that if while we are mourning for our deceas'd Friends, we permit our Paſſions to mutiny, ſo as to utter any unbecoming Reflections on the Skilfulneſs of the Divine Hand; 'tis a ſtrong evidence that our Sorrows are too exceſſive.

And this kind of Exceſs and Impatience ſeems to have overcome *David*, when in the moſt mournful Accents, and in an uncommon Strain, he laments the tragical End of his rebellious Son *Abſalom*, as the Text informs us: *The King was much moved, and went up to the Chamber over the Gate, and wept; and as he went, thus he ſaid, O my Son* Abſalom, *my Son, my Son* Abſalom! *would God I had died for thee, O* Abſalom, *my Son, my Son!* But, 2 Sam. 18. 33.

2. We

2. We ſorrow like thoſe without hope, when our Grief does ſo ruffle our Minds and enfeeble our Bodies, as to render us uncapable to diſcharge the ſpecial Duties of our Relation and Place, and to exerciſe thoſe Graces which are eminently uſeful, and very neceſſary to be called forth into act, in a time of ſolemn Mourning and deep Sadneſs. If the Mind be greatly penſive, and thrown into a convulſive Agony, and do long continue ſo, Sadneſs and Diſorder will appear in the Countenance; for the Laws of Union betwixt Body and Soul are ſo ſtrict, that 'tis impoſſible for the Faculties of the Mind to be indiſpos'd, but the Organs of the Body will be ſenſible of it, and ſuffer by it. For as any Injury done to the Body occaſions painful Senſations in the Mind, ſo a violent hurry of the Powers and Paſſions of the Soul will ſoon abate the ſtrength of the Body; which while it declines and languiſhes, increaſes the diſorder of the Spirit: ſo that by an unaccountable Sympathy they become Partners in each other's Sorrows, and mutually hinder the performance of Holy Duties, and the exerciſe of Faith, Hope and Patience. For the mutiny of our Paſſions ſends up ſuch Vapours as thicken into a Cloud; which ſitting on the Underſtanding, do ſo confound the Apprehenſion, both with regard to the Actings of theſe Graces, and the Objects upon which they are to terminate, that they are like a muſical Inſtrument that is unſtrung, and ſo unfit for uſe. Indeed there is no time more proper for the acting our ſuffering Graces, than a Day of Gloom and thick Darkneſs. But alas! this cannot be perform'd while the Mind is under Confuſion

Confuſion and Horror, and the animal Spirits exhauſted by continual ſighing. Therefore when we give ſo large a vent to our Sorrows, as to impair the Health of our Bodies, and impede the Exerciſe of our Graces, we ſorrow like thoſe that have no hope.

3. When our Grief for our deceaſed Friends is greater than for thoſe Sins which might be the occaſion of God's removing them ſo ſuddenly from us. There is hardly any afflictive Providence, but is properly a Reproof and Correction for Sin. Now if the ſmart of our Afflictions gives a deeper accent to our Sorrow than the guilt of our Sins; if we are more griev'd for the loſs of our Friend than for the viſible tokens of the Divine Anger, then our mourning is criminal. Indeed that Perſon muſt be very Stoical who can bear the loſs of an agreeable Friend, without dropping a few Tears, and ſending ſome Sighs after him; but he is no leſs to blame, that can conceive a greater Sorrow in his Soul for the loſs of an outward Comfort, than for Sin the ſad cauſe of God's ſnatching it from him. Moreover, 'tis a certain ſign that God was not valu'd by ſuch a one as the ſupreme, all-comprehending Good if any temporal Loſs does more afflict his Soul than the Sins that occaſion'd it.

4. We ſorrow as thoſe without hope for our departed Friends, when our Grief is more pungent and afflictive for the loſs of them, than for God's withdrawing his gracious and quickning Preſence, and hiding his Face from us in an angry Cloud. The Smiles of God are better, and more to be valued than the beſt Life of any Creature: therefore to be

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leſs concern'd when he frowns upon our Souls, than when he removes from us the Comforts of Life, does not only diſcover the diſorderly exceſs of our Grief, but the defect of our Judgment, in ſetting a higher value on a dying Creature than an everliving God. But I haſten to the ſecond Head.

Secondly, They may be ſaid to ſorrow as thoſe without hope, that exceed in the continuance of their Sorrows, rejecting all ſolid grounds of Comfort, as did ſeveral whoſe Names are inroll'd in ſacred Story. I'll inſtance in a few: Good old *Jacob*, upon the apprehenſion of *Joſeph*'s death, *rends his Clothes, puts Sackcloth upon his Loins, and mourn'd for his Son many days:* his Paſſion ſo got the ſtart of his Reaſon, that he refus'd to be comforted, and reſolv'd to mourn till he died, abandoning himſelf to the moſt deſperate Sorrow. And thus *Rachel* is deſcrib'd by the Prophet, as *weeping for her Children, and refuſing to be comforted, becauſe they were not.* And *Rizpah* continued by the dead Bodies of her Sons, and would not willingly be remov'd from them. And there are not a few Chriſtians who are too apt to ſlide into theſe Exceſſes upon the death of their near Relations, as if all their Happineſs was vaniſh'd and gone, when the delight of their Eyes is ſunk into a Grave out of their ſight: which immoderate Sorrow is a continued Reflection on the Divine Attributes, as if a God of infinite Wiſdom and immenſe Goodneſs were uncapable of making up the loſs of a mutable mortal Creature.

Gen. 37. 34, 35.

Jer. 31. 15.

2 Sam. 21. 10.

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Moreover, let me remark that the invincible Patience, and profound Submission of some Heathens under the most afflicting Providences, condemn the Practice of those Christians who incessantly mourn for their departed Friends, and refuse to be comforted. I'll mention but one in the room of several, and 'tis that of *Stilpon* the Philosopher, who when the City where he liv'd was reduc'd to Ashes, and his Wife and Children buried in the common Ruins, himself escaping alone from the Fire, being ask'd whether he had lost any thing? replied, * *All my Treasure's with me, Justice, Virtue, Temperance, Prudence, and this inviolable Principle, not to esteem any thing as my proper Good that can be ravish'd from me.* An Instance that very much upbraids those Christians who are intemperate either in the degree or duration of their Grief. Some time is necessary and decent for our funeral Sorrows: but to walk softly all our days in deep mourning and anguish of Spirit, because our Friends are taken from us, and made more happy than ever they were with us, is to grieve like stupid *Jews*, or hopeless Heathens; who both disbelieve the Resurrection of Christ, which is the Foundation, Model, and Pledg of ours.

Therefore that this Dissuasive of the Apostle may make a sutable Impression upon our Minds, let us now consider the Arguments he uses to inforce it, which is the

* *Senec. Epist.* 9. Omnia bona mea mecum sunt, Justitia, Virtus, Temperantia, Prudentia, hoc ipsum nihil boni putare quod eripi possit.

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III^d General Head: And here are two things to be insisted upon.

First, The Nature of their Death who die united to Christ; 'tis represented under the soft Character of a *Sleep*.

Secondly, The great Advantage that follows their Death; such as *sleep in Jesus will God bring with him*.

First, The Nature of their Death who are united to Christ, 'tis call'd a Sleep; *Those that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him*. An * Dr. *Bates*. excellent * Author on this Text observes how the Apostle varies the Expression: "Jesus died, but the Saints sleep in him; "for he sustained Death in all its Terrors, "that it might be a calm Sleep to his Peo- "ple."

Under the Old Testament we find the Death of the Saints frequently set forth by this soft and gentle Character. *David* and *Solomon*, *Jehoshaphat* and *Hezekiah* are represented at their Death to be fallen asleep.

And under the New Testament our Lord uses this Phrase upon the death of one whom Joh. 11. 11. he lov'd, *Our Friend* Lazarus *sleepeth*. And 'twas St. *Paul*'s usual Idiom to call Death a Sleep, as appears from the Scriptures in the * 1 Cor. 15. 6, 18, 20, 51. Margin *. Some indeed have been so weak as to imagine that this Sleep did equally seize Soul and Body, and have asserted, that at death the Soul passes into a state of Inactivity, and sleepeth with the Body till the Resurrection; an Opinion so repugnant to the true Principles of Philosophy and Divine Reve-

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Revelation, that 'tis seldom espous'd by any but Atheists, Socinians, and very ignorant Pretenders to Religion.

Our Souls are of an immortal nature, they neither die nor sleep, but immediately upon the death of our Bodies *return to God that gave 'em*, and are fix'd in a state of Happiness or Misery. Had not the Apostle believ'd this, we cannot imagine that he would have esteem'd Death to be gain to him; or that he would have been in any strait to determine and fix his choice, for present Death or longer Life: for the latter would have been much more eligible, if he had believ'd that his Soul at death would have been as insensible and unactive as his Body; and no doubt but he would rather have desir'd to continue in this World, where he had enjoy'd Communion with Christ, and often seen him by a steddy eye of Faith, than to be hurried out of it by Death, and render'd utterly incapable of any enjoyment of his Redeemer till the Resurrection. But 'tis yet more evident from another Expression of our Apostle, that he was very far from the Opinion, or rather Dream of the Soul's sleeping with the Body till the Resurrection: His words are these; *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord. q. d.* We have good courage, and are well arm'd against the fears of Death, being well assur'd that we shall have upon our Dissolution an immediate admittance into the Presence of our glorified Lord: for the Apostle supposes not only that the Soul is capable of existing while separated from the Body, and of exercising her Faculties and

Eccles. 12. 7.

2 Cor. 5. 8.

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Powers in ſuch a ſtate; but that ſo ſoon as ſhe leaves the Body, ſhe ſhall enter into the preſence of Chriſt, and behold his Glory.

But I paſs on, and ſhall briefly repreſent the force of the Apoſtle's Arguments againſt immoderate Sorrow for the dead.

The firſt of which is taken from the Nature of their Death who die in the Lord; 'tis deſcrib'd by the ſoft Character of a *Sleep*, which, as you have heard, refers only to the Body. Now the Death of the Righteous may be thus ſet forth on the following accounts.

1. Becauſe the Body is then eaſed of all its Pains, and freed from all Fatigue and Toil to which it was expos'd while animated with the Soul; and therefore as Death is compar'd to Sleep, ſo the Grave is compar'd to a Bed,
Iſa. 57. 2. where the righteous are ſaid to reſt. In this Life the beſt of Men are frequently made uneaſy by acute Diſtempers and corroding Pains; and Death is frequently ſought for, becauſe Life is a burden. You that have frequently viſited the Chambers of the ſick, cannot ſurely have forgotten the ſighs of thoſe Priſoners who have groan'd upon Beds of Down, as if every part of their Bodies had been violently extended on a Rack. It would be endleſs to reckon up the vaſt number of Diſeaſes that affect the Children of God in this World: for being tainted with original Sin, as well as the vileſt of the People, they may expect the ſame Diſtempers; and tho they tarry here but a few days, they are ordinarily full of trouble, and if their Bodies are not often indiſpos'd, yet thro the Malice of Enemies, and the Miſeries and Unkindneſſes of their Friends, they are frequently made to bow towards

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wards the Grave before they drop into it. For indeed the beſt of our earthly Comforts have their hidden ſtings, but they ſhall give us no more pain and uneaſineſs after we are fallen aſleep in Jeſus: *For in the Grave the wicked ceaſe from troubling; there the weary be at reſt: there the Priſoners reſt together, they hear not the voice of the Oppreſſor.* Job 3. 17, 18.

2. In Sleep no labour is expected from the Body; ſo when Believers are overtaken with a mortal ſlumber, Chriſt expects no Service from their Bodies. While the Soul continues united to the Body, we are oblig'd to yield the Members of the one, as well as the Faculties of the other, as *Inſtruments of Righteouſneſs unto God.* But in a ſtate of ſeparation there is expected neither Service nor Suffering from the Body. So that while we continue on the Stage of this World, the Advice of the Wiſe-Man is very proper: *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledg, nor Wiſdom in the Grave whither thou goeſt.* All our vital and animal Operations ſhall ceaſe when our Spirits return to God, and our Bodies are reduc'd to Duſt. The one is fix'd in an unalterable ſtate of Happineſs or Miſery, and the other put into an incapacity for Action. Rom. 6. 13. Eccleſ. 9. 10.

A middle place betwixt Heaven and Hell for departed Spirits is a groundleſs Imagination; for it could not be ſaid with truth, that ſuch as die in the Lord *reſt from their Labours*, if they were to paſs into a refining Fire, equally tormenting in degree, but not in duration with that of Hell, as thoſe of the *Roman* Faction aſſert. Therefore let us Rev. 14. 13.

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rather attend to the words of our Lord, and
Joh. 9. 4. follow his Example: *I muſt work the Works of him that ſent me, while it is day; the night cometh when no Man can work.*

3. Death to the Righteous is diſarm'd of its ſting; and being alter'd in its nature, it may ſutably be ſet forth by the notion of
1 Cor. 15. 56. Sleep. St. *Paul* tells us, that *the ſting of Death is Sin, and the ſtrength of Sin is the Law.* Death receives its deſtroying Power from Sin, and Sin from the Law; Sin being a Tranſgreſſion of the Law, which diſcovers its odious nature, and denounces Damnation for it. But Death approaches Believers without its ſting, Chriſt having yielded an indefective Obedience to the Law, and ſuffer'd the penalty of it in the room and ſtead of Believers.
Rom. 8. 1. Hence ſays the Apoſtle, *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt*
Gal 3. 13. *Jeſus. Chriſt hath redeem'd 'em from the Curſe of the Law, being made a Curſe for them.* And the Apoſtle repreſents Believers as triumphing over Death in ſuch terms as theſe; *O*
1 Cor. 15. 55, 57. *Death, where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory? —— Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Chriſt has remov'd the ſcandal of Death by dying, and perfum'd the Grave by lying in it, and paſſing through it.

4. The Death of the Righteous is compar'd to a Sleep, on the account of what ſhall follow thereupon: for as men do awake after Sleep, ſo they ſhall revive after Death, as we are aſſur'd by a very remarkable Prophecy and
Hoſ. 13. 14. Promiſe; *I will ranſom them from the Power of the Grave, I will redeem them from Death: O Death, I will be thy Plagues; O Grave, I will*

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will be thy Deſtruction: repentance ſhall be hid from mine eyes. In which words we are to conſider the Prophet as perſonating Chriſt, and uttering the Triumphs of a mighty Conqueror: which contain a glorious Promiſe to all the Elect of a Victory over Death, which ſhall be partially accompliſh'd at the time of their Diſſolution, but finally conſummated in the day of the Reſurrection: *for Death hath not ſuch a power over the living, nor the Grave over the dead, as Chriſt hath over both, to deſtroy the one, and ſwallow up the other in victory.*

Theſe ſeveral things laid together, compoſe a very ſolid Argument to diſſuade from immoderate Sorrow for thoſe that ſleep in Jeſus. But this leads to the

Second Argument which the Apoſtle urges upon the ſame account, which is drawn from the great advantage that ſhall follow the death of the Righteous: *Such as ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him.*

Which either ſuppoſes or implies theſe ſeveral things:

Firſt, That Jeſus Chriſt, who is God-Man, will make his ſecond Appearance or Coming at the end of the World. I underſtand God in my Text perſonally for the Son: *To them that look for him* (ſays the Author to the *Hebrews*) *ſhall he appear the ſecond time without Sin unto Salvation.* There is a double Coming of Chriſt mentioned in Scripture; the firſt in the Form of a Servant, the ſecond with all the Glory of an Incarnate God: At his firſt coming he was deſpiſed and rejected of Men, but at his ſecond *every knee ſhall bow to him,* Phil. 2. 9, *of* 10, 11.

Heb. 9. 28.

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of things in Heaven, of things on Earth, and things under the Earth; and every Tongue confeſs that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. At his firſt coming he conceal'd his Glory by the Veil of his Fleſh; but at his ſecond he deſigns to manifeſt and diſplay it in the moſt bright and majeſtick manner. At his firſt coming into this World he was entertain'd in a Stable, and when he went out of it he expir'd upon an infamous Tree; but when he comes again, he will appear in the Clouds ſeated on *a great white Throne*, the Emblem of his unſpotted Holineſs and regal Authority. At his firſt coming, he was reproach'd and deſpis'd of the People; but when he comes a ſecond time, his Enemies ſhall be ſtruck with a defenceleſs ſilence. And tho ſome may be ready to ſay, our Lord delays his coming, becauſe he has been conceal'd from their ſight for ſeveral Ages by the Curtains of Heaven, yet know, it will not be long e'er he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarry; the Curtains ſhall ſhortly be drawn, and the Scenes of Glory ſhall open: 'tis as certain that he will come, as if the Event was paſt, or as if we now ſaw the Heavens open, and he moving towards us in the Chariot of a bright Cloud. But, Lord, what will his Enemies do in the great Day of his Wrath! how will they bear the lightning of his Eyes, the ſmoke of his Breath, the thunder of his Voice, the weight of his Arm, and the terrors of his Wrath; who have deſpiſed his Grace, blaſphem'd his Perſon, and ſpurn'd at the ſounding Bowels of his Love?

Secondly, It implies the Reſurrection of their Bodies who ſleep in Jeſus. Chriſt cannot bring them

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them with him in the Clouds of Heaven, unleſs he firſt fetch them from the bowels of the Earth, and the bottom of the Sea; for at the ſound of the laſt Trump, all the Elements ſhall give up their Dead. Believers ſhall not always continue under the power of Death, but ſhall be reviv'd incorruptible and immortal. Indeed to Reaſon, not improv'd by the ſupernatural Light of Divine Revelation, it ſeems an incredible thing that God ſhould raiſe the Dead. *Pliny* reciting thoſe things which he thought not to be in the Power of God, mentions theſe two, *Mortales æternitate donare, aut revocare defunctos*; *Lib. 2. cap. 7.* And tho there are various things in Nature which are ſhadows of the Reſurrection, yet I am inclined to think they would never have convinc'd us of it, had not the Scripture reveal'd it to us. The Earth has been repreſented as a kind of Grave or Sepulcher to the vegetable World; where (as one obſerves) the vital Powers are ſealed up and ſtifled all the Winter, and yet at Spring are actuated, expand and ſend forth a lively Verdure. So a Grain of Corn is not quicken'd, except it rot and die. Our ſleep every night is the Image of Death, and our awaking in the morning a Shadow of the Reſurrection. Now altho from theſe circular Revolutions of Nature, a probable Argument for the Reſurrection may be drawn; yet thoſe that are certain and concluding, are only to be fetch'd from the Fountain of Truth, *The ſure Word of Prophecy*. And if it ſhould be ſaid, that ſeveral Heathens believ'd the Reſurrection of the Body; that may be accounted for two ways: either Tradition might hand

Acts 26. 8.

Mr. Beconſal.

it

it down from *Noah*, or they might gain light in this Doctrine by converſing with the Writings of the *Old Teſtament*: for I think nothing is more evident, than that a great many Heathen Authors have borrowed the brighter Notions that adorn their Books, from the inſpir'd Writings of *Moſes* and the Prophets, as ſeveral Learned Men have abundantly prov'd. So that I ſay, the only infallible aſſurance we have of the Reſurrection of the Body, is founded on Divine Revelation.

It will therefore be neceſſary that I recite a few paſſages of Scripture before I proceed. The firſt I ſhall mention is the words of

Job 19. 25, 26. *Job: I know that my Redeemer liveth; and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the Earth. And tho after my skin Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God; whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and my eyes ſhall behold, and not another, tho my reins be conſumed within me.* Which Text, tho by ſome underſtood of a providential Reſurrection, yet I think not without ſome force upon it: for I cannot ſee any neceſſity of taking it in a figurative and improper ſenſe. I am ſure that St. *Clement*, who was not only contemporary with St. *Paul* the Apoſtle, but his Companion and Fellow-labourer, in his firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, cites this Text to prove the Reſurrection of the Body, and underſtands it in a literal proper ſenſe. But that paſſage which is yet more plain and full, is the words of

John 5. 28, 29. our Bleſſed Saviour: *Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the Graves ſhall hear his Voice, and ſhall come forth: they that have done good, unto the Reſurrection of Life; and they that have done evil,*

to

to the Resurrection of Damnation. Which Text is so expressive of the Resurrection of the Body, that it needs no Comment. It also proves that the very same Body that fell by Death, shall arise again; for if it be not the very same Body which was laid in the Grave that is call'd forth by Christ's powerful Voice, 'tis not properly a Resurrection, but a new Production of the same specifick Being. But when I speak of the Resurrection of the *Body*, I assert that there shall not only be rais'd the same specifical, but the same numerical *Body*; not only the same *Body* for kind, but for substance: not that I affirm that every individual Particle that compos'd the *Body* when it died, shall be rais'd up again, but so much of the Matter that made up the necessary constituent parts of it. Now of what is necessary, I think an ingenious Modern gives a very probable account; his words are these: "By necessary Parts, *says he*, I mean those which remain "after the utmost degree of Maceration, "without which the *Body* would not be in- "tegral, but imperfect. And these are chiefly "the Bones, the Skin, the Nerves, the Ten- "dons, the Ligaments, and the Substance of "the several Vessels. As long as these and "all that are necessary to Life remain, the "*Body* is truly whole, tho never so much ma- "cerated." *Dr.* Hody.

But before I go off from this Head, I would make a remark upon one Phrase, which is within the compass of my Text, and I think proves the Identity of the dying and rising *Body*; and that is Death's being set forth by Sleep, which would be very improper, if the very *Bodies* that sleep in Jesus and are dead, should

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ſhould not be awaken'd and reviv'd in the morning of the Reſurrection.

There is but one thing more I ſhall ſtay to mention, farther to ſupport this important Article; and 'tis the inſtance given by the Apoſtle of thoſe that ſhall be alive at Chriſt's ſecond coming: he tells us, *they ſhall not all ſleep, but they ſhall all be chang'd.* Now this Change muſt refer to the Qualities of their *Bodies*, not to the Subſtance of them: we cannot imagine that by being chang'd, he means that the whole Subſtance of their *Bodies* ſhould be annihilated, and that they ſhall have quite new *Bodies* form'd out of other matter. Moreover let me obſerve, that ſhould thoſe very *Bodies* be deſtroy'd, and new ones united to thoſe Souls, the deſtruction of the *Body* and the breach of the union would be Death; whereas the Apoſtle aſſerts, *all ſhall not die.* So that upon the whole I argue thus: That if thoſe Perſons who are found alive at Chriſt's ſecond coming ſhall retain their old *Bodies* only with new Qualities, then thoſe that are rais'd from the Dead ſhall have the ſame *Bodies* which were formerly join'd to their Souls, only with the addition of new Qualities. For what reaſon can any man aſſign, that the Saints who ſhall be alive when Chriſt ſhall come to judg the World, ſhould be caught up into the Air with their old *Bodies* only ennobled and refin'd, and thoſe that died ſhould have *Bodies* intirely new, and ſuch as were never united to their Souls before, ſuch as never were the Inſtruments either of ſinning, or ſerving of God?

1 Cor. 15. 51.

Now the Apoſtle does not barely tell us of the Saints being brought with God our Saviour

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viour at his Appearing and Kingdom, which implies their Reſurrection, but he ſhews that their Reſurrection depends upon the Death and Reſurrection of our Bleſſed Saviour: for ſays he, *If we believe that Jeſus dy'd and roſe again, even ſo them alſo that ſleep in Jeſus will God bring with him.*

Firſt, Upon his death: *for thro death Chriſt hath deſtroy'd him that had the power of Death, that is the Devil.* When men were doom'd to death for the breach of the Law, Chriſt changed conditions with them, and offer'd up his *precious Blood* as a Ranſom to God for them; ſo that our Saviour was victorious in dying, and conquer'd as he expir'd on the infamous Tree. He bruis'd the head of the old Serpent, and ſilenc'd the *Anathema's* of a broken Law; when in the ſharpeſt Agony, and amidſt a thouſand torments, he bowed his head and gave up the Ghoſt. I confeſs that his own Exaltation and Triumphs began with his Reſurrection; but if there had not been an infinite ſatisfying Merit in his Death, he had been ſo faſt fetter'd with the bonds of Death, that he could never have burſt them: but having offer'd a Sacrifice of a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour to God, which was of infinite worth and conſideration, the Pains of Death were loos'd, for 'twas impoſſible he ſhould be held by them: naturally impoſſible, becauſe of his irreſiſtible Power as God; legally impoſſible, becauſe he had paid the full Demands of the Law and Juſtice.

Heb. 2. 14.

1 Pet. 1. 19.

Acts 2. 24.

Secondly, Our Reſurrection from the Grave depends on the Reſurrection of Chriſt. Chriſt's Reſurrection from the dead proves that ours is not only poſſible, but infallibly certain.

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And this St. *Paul* reaſons upon in a very convincing manner: *Now if Chriſt be preach'd that he roſe from the dead, how ſay ſome among you, that there is no Reſurrection of the dead? q. d.* How can any deny either the poſſibility or certainty of the Reſurrection of the *Body*, ſince Chriſt has evidenced both by his own Reſurrection from the Dead? Chriſt has remov'd both the moral and natural impoſſibility of our revival after death, the one by his abundant Merit, and the other by his own triumphant Reſurrection: for having taken away the guilt of our Sins which is the cauſe of Death, Death which is the conſequent of Sin ſhall be deſtroy'd and ſwallow'd up in victory. And our Lord declares, *That he is the Reſurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me* (ſays he) *tho he were dead, yet ſhall he live: q. d.* I am, and ſhall be the principal cauſe of the Reſurrection, my voice ſhall break the ſilence of the Grave, and cauſe thoſe that ſleep in the duſt to awake and live again. He is alſo ſaid to be *the firſt fruits of them that ſleep.* And ſays the ſame Apoſtle, *For ſince by man came Death, by man came alſo the Reſurrection of the dead. For as in* Adam *all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.*

1 Cor. 15. 12.

Joh. 11. 25.

1 Cor. 15. 20, 21, 22.

From all which we may collect, that our Saviour's Reſurrection is the Pledg and Aſſurance of ours. *For if the Spirit of him that raiſed up Jeſus from the dead dwell in you, he that rais'd up Chriſt from the dead, ſhall alſo quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* In a word, Chriſt roſe from the dead as a publick Perſon, as the Surety and Head of his Church; and becauſe he lives, we ſhall live alſo. And being

Rom. 8. 11.

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called *the first-born among the dead*, he owns all that have dy'd in the Faith as his Brethren, who shall be restored to Life according to his excellent Pattern; for his Resurrection is not only the Pledg, but the Model of ours. Therefore we are expresly told, *That he shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.* How glorious our Lord is in his exalted human Nature, cannot fully be represented by the most graceful turns of Language, and lofty figures of Speech; therefore we must be content with very imperfect *Ideas* of his Glory, till we have the happiness to see him as he is. Yet we have enough reveal'd concerning it, to invigorate our desires, and raise our wonder: *His Eyes* are represented *like a flame of fire; his Voice as the sound of many waters; his Feet like to fine brass, as if they burn'd in a furnace; his Countenance as the Sun shining in its full strength.* Now after this bright Pattern shall the Bodies of the Saints be form'd in the Resurrection. O what proportion of Parts! what agreeableness of Colour! how radiant an Air shall sit upon their Countenance! for they shall shine with a lustre exceeding the brightness of all the Lamps of Heaven. The Apostle also assures us, that *tho they are sown natural, they shall be rais'd spiritual Bodies*; *i. e.* the Matter of 'em shall be exalted and improv'd to an extraordinary degree of fineness: for Matter is properly enough said to be spiritual when 'tis much refin'd. And how great a Difference may we observe in material things? for instance, betwixt the animal Spirits in the Brain, and the grosser Parts of the Body; betwixt a Lump of Clay,

Phil. 3. 21.

Rev. 1. 15.

Mar. 15. 43. Dan. 12. 2, 3.

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and the refin'd Matter of the Air; betwixt the Earth, and the Sun that ſhines upon it; yet all material Subſtances: from which we may collect what Chriſt can do to exalt and refine our Bodies in the Reſurrection. But farther, they may be called Spiritual, in that they will be much better fitted to ſerve our Spirits than they are now. Here our Bodies are oftentimes a Clog and Hindrance to us; but in the Reſurrection they ſhall be like Wings to our Souls, or to uſe the Phraſe of the Antients, *They ſhall be as a Celeſtial Chariot to the Soul*; they ſhall neither be the Cauſe of our Ignorance, nor of our Sinning, as they are now; they ſhall not hinder, but rather help forward our Devotions. In a word, they ſhall never ſuffer nor die more, for they ſhall be rais'd immortal and incorruptible; the one reſpects a Deliverance from Death, the other a freedom from Diſeaſes: ſo that Incorruptibility is an addition to the Happineſs of immortal Creatures; for if Perſons ſhould never die, yet if they were often diſeaſed, their Happineſs would be incompleat: but the rais'd Bodies of the Saints ſhall never know any more Sorrow, Sickneſs, or Death; it ſhall not be in the power of any Creature to diſorder the curious Contexture of the rais'd Bodies. Mortality then will be ſwallowed up of Life; *This corruptible ſhall put on Incorruption, and this mortal Immortality.*

1 Cor. 15. 53.

Thirdly, The Saints being brought with Chriſt at his ſecond Coming, does not only ſuppoſe their Reſurrection, but that with their rais'd Bodies they ſhall aſcend up into the Air. And ſo much the Apoſtle aſſerts a little after my Text; *For this we ſay unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto*

1 Theſſ. 4. 15, 17.

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to the coming of the Lord, ſhall not prevent them which are aſleep — For we ſhall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air: and ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord. Whether thoſe that are rais'd from the dead, and thoſe that ſhall be chang'd who never died, ſhall be caught up into the Air by the immediate attractive Power of Chriſt, or by the Miniſtry of Angels, I will not determine; but that they ſhall aſcend in order to their coming with him, is beyond all diſpute: and probably their Bodies may be ſo refin'd, that they may be capable of treading Air, and mounting upwards as eaſily as they now move upon the Earth.

Fourthly, Being brought with Chriſt at his ſecond Coming, ſhall be to illuſtrate the Glory of our incarnate God, and to advance the Happineſs of his redeemed ones. They ſhall attend their Lord's Triumph, and make up a part of his magnificent Retinue: for as he ſhall come *to be admir'd in all thoſe that believe*, ſo they ſhall all ſhare in his Glory; they will then know by experience, what riches of Glory is comprehended in that Promiſe and Privilege, of being *Heirs of God, and joint-Heirs with Jeſus Chriſt*. O what a glorious Proceſſion will this be through the Air! when he that ſuffered upon the infamous Tree, ſhall appear at the head of ſo long and bright a Train! when all that the Father gave to him, ſhall appear with glittering Crowns and ſpreading Palms, the Rewards of Grace, and the Tokens of Victory! 2 Theſſ. 1. 10.

I proceed now to make ſome improvement of what I have ſaid. And,

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First, This Doctrine that I have deliver'd, discovers to us the Excellency of the Christian Institution: *Life and Immortality is brought to light by the Gospel.* All that has been said by Heathen Poets and Philosophers concerning a Future State, was but obscure Conjecture to the shining Revelation of the Gospel. They understood not that the Sting of Death was remov'd by the Sufferings of the Redeemer, or that the Body should be rais'd with a transcendent Lustre and Dignity, to receive a Reward with the Soul. Yea, under the Mosaick Oeconomy, a future State was but obscurely reveal'd; but under the Dispensation of the Gospel, we have a most charming Landskip of Heaven, and the way to obtain it is set in the most clear and certain Light.

Secondly, This Doctrine may be improv'd to guard good Men against the slavish Fears of Death. Why should the Righteous be afraid to repose upon a Bed of Dust? Death is but a Sleep, from which we shall be awaken'd in the Morning of the Resurrection; and Christ, as you have heard, hath disarm'd Death of its Sting, and alter'd it in its very nature to the Righteous. I confess, I do not wonder that the Wicked and Profane are afraid of Death, for they know it puts a period to their Pleasures, and begins their Torments; it snatches them from the Joys of Life, and fixes 'em under the Agonies of the second Death. So that some not only fear Death it self, but the very Name of it is terrible: which occasion'd a Prince that I have read of, to forbid the mention of it in all his Court. Yea, so enslav'd are some by the fear of Death, that they conceive an Abhorrence at the sight of a Coffin, the dress of

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of Mourners, and the Solemnities of a Funeral; which (as one says) are only the Outguards that make up the Retinue of the King of Terrors.

'Tis reported of *Alexander*, who had often encounter'd the numerous Armies of the *Asian* Monarchs, and despis'd the Terror of Battels, yet when he was seiz'd with a mortal Disease in *Babylon*, he was so afraid of Death, that his Court was fill'd with Diviners and Victims, and all the little arts of Superstition were us'd to preserve his Life. And indeed all Men have just reason to fear Death, who have nothing but a gloomy Prospect beyond it, the terrible Apprehensions of an angry God, and a tormenting *Tophet*. But such whose Guilt is remov'd by the Blood of Christ, and their Souls renew'd and cleans'd by the Spirit of Christ, have no reason to fear Death, for it approaches 'em without a Sting.

Thirdly, From the Doctrine I have establish'd, we learn of what necessity it is to be united to Christ; for 'tis only such that shall have part in the first Resurrection, over whom the second Death shall have no power: 'tis only such as die in the Lord, *i. e.* united to Christ by the Spirit and Faith, that are said to sleep in Jesus, and that God our Saviour will bring with him. I know that some Men think themselves *very witty*, when they ridicule the Doctrine of Union with Christ; but I am sure they are *very miserable*, if we may take the word of an Apostle for it, who says, *that if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* Rom. 8. 9. Now none but such as belong to Christ shall attend his Triumph at the Last Day, and reign with him in his immovable Kingdom.

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Fourthly, How great are our Obligations to our Redeemer, who hath alter'd the very nature of Death by dying in our ſtead, and given us aſſurance of our Reſurrection by his own riſing from the dead? O the Heights, the Depths, the Lengths, the Breadths of the Love of God in Chriſt Jeſus! Shall not our Hearts burn with a grateful Flame! and ſhall not his unexampled Love render him exceeding precious to our Souls, and cauſe us to
Rev. 5. 12. ſtrike up with the Church Triumphant, *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wiſdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Bleſſing, for ever and ever!*

Fifthly, How little reaſon have thoſe that are united to Chriſt, to deſire any long tarry in this World, which is a ſink of Sin and Sorrow, a place of Gloomineſs and Darkneſs; where we conſtantly ſuffer, and are always in danger of ſinning? Moreover, while here, we are kept from our Inheritance and our Father's Houſe: Therefore it better becomes a true Member of Chriſt's Myſtical Body, to deſire rather *to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all.*

Sixthly, How great is the Difference betwixt the Death of a Believer and that of
Mr. *Cruſo.* an Infidel? "They may both fall by the "ſame Diſeaſes, and their Duſt be mingled "in the ſame Pit; but their immortal Part "will be everlaſtingly divided: There is a "great Gulf fixed between the Spirits in "Priſon, and the Souls in Paradiſe." We
Luke 16. 22, 23. read that when the rich Man died, *in Hell he lift up his Eyes, being in Torments*; but when the religious Beggar left this World, he *was carried*

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carried by Angels into Abraham's *Bosom.* An impenitent Sinner at Death loses the very Shadows that he courted for Happiness; but the Saint heightens his Felicity into Perfection. *Mark the perfect Man, and behold the upright;* Psal. 37. 37. *for the end of that Man is peace.*

Lastly, If such as sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him, then let us not sorrow like those without hope when God removes our Relations and Friends by death; especially such whom we have good ground to believe are fallen asleep in Jesus, as blessed be God we have of that excellent and worthy Gentleman Mr. *ABBOTT*, whose Death has given the sad occasion to this Discourse. And is he dead? Well, but his Name lives, and will be fresh and fragrant to Posterity. And I cannot do Justice to his Memory, without taking notice of those Graces and Virtues that eminently shin'd in his Conversation and Conduct; for *the Memory of the Just shall be blessed, and the Righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.*

I am not now to give the Character of one that dwelt in a Shade, but of one whose publick Imploys expos'd him to continual View; so that I doubt not of a crowd of Witnesses to attest the Truth of what I shall say. I confess, to collect all that was excellent and imitable in the deceas'd Gentleman, is too big a task for so unskilful a Person as I am; who can but lay the dead Colours of his Character, and must leave the finishing Strokes to more artful Hands, to Men of better Judgment, of greater compass of Thought, and exactness of Stile. I must own I am at a loss where to begin, and what part of his excellent Character I shall in-

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ſiſt upon; but I think his Piety towards God may properly enough be ſpoken of in the firſt place.

He began very early to be religious, devoted to Heaven the flouriſhing Bloom of his Youth, the firſt and beſt of his time; he had well ſtudied and digeſted the great Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, and had right Notions of the Perſon and Mediatory Work of Chriſt, which had a mighty Influence into his whole Converſation: for tho he liv'd in a crowd and hurry of Buſineſs, yet he loſt not his Religion in the midſt of it, but kept cloſe to the private and publick Duties of Divine Worſhip.

With what Seriouſneſs and Diligence did he attend on Sermons, and what Pains did he take in the writing and repeating of them? which was the more extraordinary, becauſe his publick Imploys engag'd him in writing even to Toil and Fatigue.

He was not a Gentleman that affected Singularity, or pretended to more Purity than other Chriſtians; but there was a native Gracefulneſs that attended his Acts of Piety and Devotion, which he manag'd without Pomp, or Noiſe: this was an evidence of his great Humility, a Grace very conſpicuous in him, as ſome of the pooreſt in this place cannot but have obſerv'd, to whom he carried it as if they had been his Equals; which added a mighty Luſtre to the reſt of his Virtues.

His Zeal for ſpreading the great Truths of the Goſpel was ſtrong and regular, bright and flaming; for notwithſtanding his many neceſſary Avocations, he would redeem time to adviſe and aſſiſt in the promotion of ſubſtantial Godlineſs. His

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His Sincerity was very extraordinary and visible, for he appear'd always with great Freedom, Simplicity and Plainness in Conversation; he detested all Reserves and Disguises, 'twas too mean for him to appear in Masquerade, tho Alamode: Integrity preserv'd him from the meanness of Flattery, and he preserv'd his Integrity amidst a thousand Temptations.

He was a true *Nathanael*, who by the Grace of God (abating the common Frailtys of human Life) might be said to *keep himself unspotted from the World*; for he acted like *Joseph* in the Court of *Pharaoh*, only with this difference, that he had not learn'd to swear by his Life.

In his Family he was very exemplary, gave great encouragement to the beginnings of Piety, but deeply resented the negligence of Servants or Children that should absent themselves from Family-worship.

The Company he most delighted in, was such where he might either do good, or receive it; and indeed I may say, that (like the Master he serv'd) *he went about doing good:* for as he sought out Objects to exercise his Charity upon, so he would thank his particular Friends when they told him of any that were deserving of his Alms, and would as chearfully relieve 'em in the most generous and noble manner. He was never deaf to the Complaints of the Poor and Miserable, nor blind to the Marks of their Poverty; neither did he shut his Heart, his Purse, or his Door against 'em: he did not only wish 'em well, and give them soft Language, but afforded them solid Supplies. He was truly that liberal Man whom *Solomon* speaks of, that deviseth

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ſeth liberal things: For as *he was created in Chriſt Jeſus to good Works, ſo he did abound in all the Fruits of Righteouſneſs and Charity, which are by Jeſus Chriſt to the Praiſe and Glory of God the Father.* And tho he was thus rich in good Works, yet his charitable Diſtributions were never attended with the ſound of a Trumpet, but diſpers'd to Multitudes in the moſt ſilent and ſecret way. *He deliver'd the Poor that cry'd, and the Fatherleſs, and him that had none to help him; the Bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh came upon him, and he cauſed the Widow's heart to ſing for joy.* Yet in all this he obſerved the Rule of our Saviour as near as poſſible, *not letting his right hand know what his left hand did.*

He gave very liberally, tho very privately, to encourage the bringing up of a Pious and Learned Miniſtry in *Ireland*; and underſtanding that ſuch a Deſign was forming in *London*, he offer'd moſt generouſly to encourage it: but before it could be accompliſh'd, cruel Death fetter'd thoſe Hands that were always active in diſpenſing the moſt noble Charities.

And I think it no contemptible Branch of his Character, that he paid a deference and reſpect to all that were of the Sacred Order of the Miniſtry, under what denomination ſoever they paſſed: Tho his Ears were not ſervilely boar'd to any; for he did not look on them as Lords of his Faith, but Helpers of his Joy; yet, I ſay, he was not wanting to afford them the Teſtimonies of his Reſpect. He gave liberally to ſupport ſeveral Lectures; particularly he encouraged that which is carried on in this Place: for he was

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a Gentleman of universal Charity to all that bore the Image of Christ.

He was very tender of the Reputation of all Men; and as he could not endure to hear the Follies of Men made a matter of Diversion, so he always deeply resented the Reproaches and Calumnies that are too commonly the Sauce of Conversation, and look'd upon a Man's good Name as too valuable to lie at the Mercy of every Jester: so that I may say he was as free from rash Censures, as he was from deserving 'em.

He was always ready to compose any Difference betwixt contending Parties, which he did with that Dexterity and Impartiality, that the Man was suspected to have a very bad Cause that declin'd his Arbitration.

As to his acquitting himself in his publick Imploy, it was with that Honour that few Men in an Age do; he was so little charm'd with the glitter of Wealth, and his Mind was so imbu'd with the Principles of Christian Religion, that he thought it below him to raise his Estate by the mean practices of Craft or Violence, Bribery or Oppression.

He fear'd God and honour'd the King, and did not meddle with those that are given to change: His Loyalty to his present Majesty *William* the King of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, and the remarkable Services he has done, in contributing towards supporting the Credit of the Nation at a time when it run very low, are too well known to need reciting here.

Should I speak of him as a Husband, a Parent, a Master, or a Friend, I may say without an *Hyperbole*, he had few Equals under Heaven; for never did I see a more affectionate

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nate Husband, tender Father, pleasant and faithful Friend. Yet all these things that I have mention'd, and a great many more I have not time to name, that are lovely and of good report, could not prevent his being
Psal. 89.48. seiz'd with a mortal Sickness: *For what Man is he that liveth, and shall not see Death? Shall he deliver his Soul from the hand of the Grave? Selah.*

His Illness was more violent and dangerous than was generally apprehended, till within a day or two before his Death: he then being ask'd concerning his Hopes of Eternal Life, declar'd, *They were fix'd on the Satisfaction and Obedience of Christ, and that upon the Righteousness of the Redeemer alone he rested for the pardon of his Sins and everlasting Happiness.* But immediately after this he grew delirious, and so was render'd uncapable of discoursing distinctly concerning Divine Things; yet even while he was thus indispos'd, he desir'd me to pray with him, and told me that he heartily join'd. Indeed a few hours before he dy'd he lay a little compos'd, and we imagin'd that some Revival would have ensu'd; so apt are we to flatter our selves with the belief of that which is the matter of our earnest Wishes. But alas! one hour sunk all expectation of Life, and the next put a Period to it.

Thus liv'd and dy'd that admirable Person whose Decease has occasion'd this Discourse; and tho he be dead, yet he speaketh, and his Works praise him more in the Gate, than I have done from the Pulpit. Is he dead? he is not gone out of the World, but remov'd to a better part of it; he has only chang'd his Place, his Company, and Work.

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Therefore you his ſorrowful ſurviving Half, and the reſt of his Mourning Friends ſhould not think on him as loſt, but as ſet at liberty; not as decaying amongſt the Clods of the Valley, but as ſhining on an illuſtrious Throne. Stop your Tears, for were he ſenſible of your Grief, and capable of making a Pauſe in the midſt of his Hallelujahs, he would ſay to you that ſurvive, *Weep not for me, but weep for your ſelves.* Therefore let us all think what Improvement to make of this ſudden and ſurprizing Providence: And thoſe things that 'tis proper to inſtruct us in, I ſhall but juſt name, and conclude. Let this Providence put us on the moſt ſerious Conſideration; *In the day of adverſity conſider*, ſays the wiſe Man. Let us conſider and reflect upon the Vanity and Uncertainty of Human Life; ſurely when ſo bright and vigorous a Flame is ſo ſuddenly extinguiſh'd, that Scripture is eminently fulfill'd that ſays, *Verily Man in his beſt Eſtate is altogether Vanity.* Let us learn a holy Indifferency to the things of this World; let us be convinc'd how ineffectual are all kind of means to preſerve Life, when the Decree is gone forth. If the Skill of Phyſicians, if the melting Affection of a Wife, and the fervent Prayers of Miniſters could have prevented the Death of our Friend, we had not been mourning here at this time: Therefore let us adore the Sovereignty of God, who acts as he pleaſes, and gives no account of his Matters to the Children of Men. Let us truſt in the Lord, who changeth not, and ſubmit to his diſpoſing Will, which is directed by Wiſdom and Love. Finally, prepare to follow; *Be ye alſo ready:* walk with God while you

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you tarry here, that when he calls you out of this lower World, he may take you into his bliſsful Preſence, and ſay unto each of you,

Mat. 25. 21. *Well done, thou good and faithful Servant; thou haſt been faithful over a few things, I will make thee Ruler over many things: enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.*

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A

Funeral Sermon

Occaſion'd by the

DEATH

OF

Mr. *WILLIAM WILKS*,

Who departed this Life *Nov.* 21. 1700.

Preach'd at *Stepny* the 26*th* of the ſame Month.

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To my Worthy Friend

Mrs. SARAH WILKS.

MADAM,

I WAS your Husband's Requeſt on his Death-bed, and your Renewal of it after his Deceaſe, that engag'd me to diſcourſe from that Text of Scripture (at the time of his Interment) which is the Foundation of the following Sermon. Which through the Importunity of you and your Friends, and not my own choice, is now made publick; elſe I could never have had the vanity to expoſe ſo uncorrect a Diſcourſe in an Age ſo judicious *and* polite. *But if any thing in ſo plain and unpoliſh'd a Sermon, ſhall any way promote the Glory of the* Re-

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deemer, *in converting one* wandring Sinner *to the* Wiſdom of the Juſt, *or ſhall any way further the common Edification of the Church; I ſhall be content to be cenſur'd by thoſe who have a more comprehenſive Genius (whoſe Thoughts run* deeper, *and whoſe way of Writing is* finer) *while I have the Honour of being ſerviceable to the true Intereſt of Souls.*

I have one thing more to ſay, viz. *That I have made very little alteration in the Copy that was ſent me by him who took the Diſcourſe in Short-hand; and have only added what I had not time to deliver when the Sermon was preach'd.*

MADAM, *May that God who has touched you in the moſt ſenſible part, and ſnatcht from you* the Delight of your Eyes, *afford you the Light of his own Countenance, and the Comforts of his free Spirit: And that the little living Images of him that is Dead, may be a Bleſſing to you that ſurvive, are the earneſt Wiſhes of*

Your very humble Servant,

London, *Jan.* 22. 170$\frac{0}{1}$.

JOHN PIGGOTT.

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Job XIX. 25, 26, 27.

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter Day upon the Earth.

And tho after my skin Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my Fleſh ſhall I ſee God:

Whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and mine Eyes ſhall behold, and not another; tho my Reins be conſumed within me.

THERE is ſomething very aweful and inſtructive in the ſad Solemnities of a Funeral: for it is as if the Dead ſpake to the Living, and a Voice ſhould iſſue from the Coffin and the Grave, ſaying, *Man in his beſt Eſtate is altogether Vanity.* And indeed the true Deſign of a Funeral Diſcourſe is not extravagantly to commend the Dead, but ſeaſonably to adviſe and inſtruct the Living; to Pſal. 39. 5.

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which excellent purpoſe the Words I have juſt now read, are moſt admirably adapted: tho, I confeſs, there needs a much abler Perſon than my ſelf, to open and apply a Text ſo copious, in the narrow limits of an Hour; there being in the Words ſuch a variety of matter, as might eaſily furniſh out ſeveral Sermons. But as God ſhall aſſiſt, I ſhall endeavour to explain them as clearly, and improve them as pertinently as I can.

This Chapter, of which the Text is a part, contains *Job*'s Anſwer to *Bildad* the *Shuhite*; wherein he deplores the Miſeries of his Life, and repreſents the Troubles he ſuſtained, in the moſt elegant manner, and in the moſt affecting and melting Strains. Upon which, in *Ver.* 23. he cries out, *O! that my Words were now written! O! that they were printed in a Book! That they were graven with an Iron Pen and Lead, in the Rock for ever!* Whether he means what he had before ſpoken in anſwer to his Friends; or the Words of the Text which immediately follow this Wiſh, is not eaſily determined: if he intends the former, then the Text is brought in as a reaſon of his Courage and Confidence in the Goodneſs of his cauſe; for ſays he, *I know that my Redeemer liveth:* q. d. Whatever Cenſures I may paſs under, whatever ill Thoughts you may conceive in your Minds againſt me, I have one above who will plead my Cauſe,

Job 16. 19. *For my Record is on high.* If the latter (as ſome think) then it ſhows how much he was affected with the Knowledg he had of the *Meſſiah*, and the expectation and good hope that ſprung up in his Soul thereupon. Therefore it is obſervable, that *Job* does not utter ſuch heavy Complaints, after this Confeſſion of

of Faith in the Lord his Redeemer, as he had done before: *For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the Earth. And tho after my skin Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my Fleſh ſhall I ſee God: Whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and mine Eyes ſhall behold, and not another; tho my Reins be conſumed within me.*

Theſe Words contain a Profeſſion of *Job*'s Faith, and in them we may take notice of theſe two General Parts.

Firſt, The immediate and preſent Senſe of his Mind, with reſpect to the promiſed Seed, the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

Secondly, The Expectation which he had conſequent hereupon, both with regard to the Redeemer and to himſelf.

Firſt, The immediate and preſent Senſe of *Job*'s Mind, with reſpect to the *promiſed Seed*, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in theſe Words, *For I know that my Redeemer liveth.* Wherein it will be neceſſary to conſider theſe Four things.

1*ſt*, The Object of his Faith, which he expreſſes under the Notion of a *Redeemer.*

2*dly*, The Act of his Faith, *I know.*

3*dly*, His Propriety and Intereſt in this Redeemer, *I know that* [my] *Redeemer liveth.*

4*thly*, A further Illuſtration of the Redeemer's Character, *He liveth.*

I ſhall briefly touch upon each of theſe, and then paſs to the other general Head, which I principally aim to diſcourſe from, as being moſt agreeable to a Funeral Solemnity. But,

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1*ſt*, We are to conſider the Object of *Job*'s Faith, which he expreſſes under the Notion of a Redeemer. By *Redeemer* I underſtand God the Son, the perſonal Λόγος, which was to be incarnate; which may be proved from the Propriety of the Hebrew Word *Goel*, which גאל. tho ſometimes applied in the Old Teſtament to God abſolutely or eſſentially conſidered, yet it moſt properly agrees to Jeſus Chriſt; for it ſignifies not only the act of claiming and redeeming, but alſo the Office and Relation: it ſignifies to claim or redeem by a right of Propinquity.

By the Law of *Iſrael*, the Right of Redemption lay in the next Kinſman, who was to purchaſe the Widow's Land, and to marry her Perſon; which was typical of what Chriſt ſhould do in the Fulneſs of Time: Who, that Heb. 2. 16. he might be allied to us, * *took hold of the Seed of* Abraham. By which means he had a right of Propinquity as Man, who had before a right of Propriety as God. Chriſt is Bone of our Bone, and Fleſh of our Fleſh; and hath redeemed his Church with his Blood, which is both the Right and Price of her Redemption.

Redemption ſuppoſes Slavery and Bondage. We are all by Nature Slaves to Sin and Satan, odious to the Holineſs, and obnoxious to the Juſtice of God: But the Redeemer reſcues us by Purchaſe as well as by Power, and hath

* Ἐπιλαμβάνω, in its firſt and proper ſenſe, ſignifies *to take hold of*; and in this ſenſe it is uſed in this Epiſtle, *Chap.* 8. 9. Ἐπιλαβομένου μου τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῶν, in the Day *that I took them by the Hand.*

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vindicated the Honour of the Divine Holineſs by a plenary Satisfaction to Divine Juſtice.

Here might alſo have been ſhew'd, that all the Properties that belong to a Redeemer were to be found in Chriſt, who had a Right to redeem, by aſſuming our Nature. *For both he that ſanctifieth, and they who are ſanctified, are all of one.* He that ſuffer'd on the Croſs, and they for whom he ſuffer'd, had Communion in the ſame Nature. He had alſo a valuable Price to lay down, which was that of his own precious Blood; as much as the Law demanded, or Juſtice requir'd: And this was not paid to the Devil, who had captivated and inſlaved a whole Species of Creatures, upon the Apoſtacy of *Adam*; but to God the Father, who had a Power to condemn us, and a Right to detain us in Priſon till Juſtice was ſatisfy'd: That is the firſt. Heb. 2. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.

2*dly*, Here is the Act of *Job*'s Faith, *I know that my Redeemer liveth.* Knowledg is frequently taken for Faith in the Sacred Volume, *John* 17. What our Lord calls Knowledg, *ver.* 23. he had called Faith, *ver.* 21. and indeed Knowledg is a word very proper to ſignify this Grace by; for no one Branch of Faith can be rightly exercis'd without it.

What Aſſent can a Man give to the Truth of a Revelation, if he does not know it to be Divine, and from the God of Truth? Who can aſſent to that account that is given of our Lord's Perſon in the Scripture, but he that knows that it is *the Record God has given of his Son?* 1 John 5. 10.

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Again, who that is ignorant of Chriſt's Perſon, and the Offices that he executes as a Mediator, will ever conſent to receive him as Prophet, Prieſt, and King?

So for the Act of Recumbency upon Chriſt, is it likely that any one ſhould truſt to his Righteouſneſs and Blood for the Pardon of his Sins, that is a ſtranger to his atoning Sacrifice, and the infinite Merit of it, ariſing from the Dignity of his Perſon? *They that know thy Name* (ſays the Pſalmiſt) *will put their truſt in thee.* And the Apoſtle ſays, *I know whom I have believed.* And thus *Job* in the Text, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*; or I know moſt certainly, I am ſo well aſſur'd of it, ſo ſatisfy'd in it, that I have conſented to take him as my Redeemer, and to truſt him as ſuch.

Pſal. 9. 10.

2 Tim. 1. 12.

Whether this well-grounded Perſuaſion in *Job*'s Mind, ſprung from any ſpecial Revelation that God made to him concerning the *Meſſias*; or whether 'twas only bottom'd upon that general and antient Promiſe, *The Seed of the Woman ſhall break the Serpent's Head*, I'll not determine: 'tis not improbable but there might be both. However it was, the Phraſe connotes the certainty and ſteddineſs of his Perſuaſion, and the ſtrength of his Faith: and here ſeems to be a reflex Act as well as a direct Act of Faith on the Perſon of the Redeemer; for he ſpeaks with ſo much confidence and certainty, as to exclude all doubt. And when a Soul is advanc'd thus far, Heaven in part is come down into it; for it has ſuch an aſſurance of aſcending up thither, that the Soul even taſtes of the Cluſters of *Canaan* before it enters into the promis'd Land.

Gen. 3. 15.

3*dly*,

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3*dly*, Here is the Propriety and Intereſt which *Job* profeſſeth to have in this Redeemer: *I know that* [my] *Redeemer liveth.* Hereby he ſignifies his extraordinary Affection to Chriſt, as well as his Intereſt in him. *MY REDEEMER:* they are words of great import, and tho but two, yet they ſignify more than a thouſand; for hereby he applies Chriſt to himſelf, and pronounces him to be his. It is one thing to talk of Chriſt as a Redeemer, and another to know that he is our Redeemer, and to ſay with the Apoſtle, *Who loved* me, *and gave himſelf for* me. It is Gal. 2. 20. one thing to hear of the Chriſt of God, and another to receive him by an appropriating Act of Faith. For he that is enabled to put forth ſuch an Act of Faith, is firſt made ſenſible of his need of Chriſt, and drawn to the Father by him; and then cries out, This Lord is *my Jeſus, he is my Righteouſneſs and my Life, my Hope, my Help, and my Salvation, my Lord and my God.*

And as *Job* by this appropriating Act of Faith lays claim to the Redeemer's Perſon, and all the Benefits which he hath purchas'd by his Blood; ſo hereby he doth devote and reſign, and give up himſelf, Body and Soul, to the diſpoſe of the Redeemer: For thoſe that are redeem'd, paſs into the Poſſeſſion of their Redeemer; therefore ſays the Apoſtle, *For ye are bought with a Price:* What then? 1 Cor. 6. 20. *therefore glorify God with your Bodies, and with your Spirits, which are his.*

To cloſe this Head: Till a Soul can put in ſuch a Claim as *Job* does in the Text, and by Appropriation, and ſpecial Intereſt in Chriſt, ſay,

ſay, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*; he is a ſtranger to the moſt pleaſant and comfortable part of the Chriſtian Life. For here is the Ground of our Confidence, here is the Spring
Cant. 2. 16. of our Joy, when a Soul can ſay, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his*; *I know that my Redeemer liveth.* But then,

4*thly*, Here is a further Illuſtration of the Redeemer's Character: *He liveth.* Hereby may be intended one or all of theſe things.

(1.) Our Lord's Eternity. To ſay that God liveth, is as much as to ſay, that he is Eternal. Now *Job* doth not ſay, that his Redeemer *hath lived*, or that he *ſhall live*; but that he *doth live*, without the diſtinction of Time paſt or future. God is for ever *I am:* Chriſt as God lives from Eternity, as Man to Eter-
Rev. 1. 18. nity. *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore.*

(2.) Hereby may be denoted the Irreſiſtibleneſs and Almighty Power of the Redeemer; for Life, in the Language of the Scripture, ſignifies Might and Power: and indeed we cannot ſuppoſe that Chriſt is Eternal, without concluding that he is Omnipotent. Therefore
Rev. 1. 8. they are join'd together: *I am* Alpha *and* Omega, *the beginning and the ending, ſaith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*

(3.) *I know that my Redeemer liveth: He liveth*; that is, he hath Life in himſelf; he is the Prince of Life, and he giveth it to others:
John 5. 21. not only the Father, but *the Son quickneth whom he will.* He hath purchas'd ſpiritual Life for his People on the Croſs, and he diſpenſes it to them from the Throne.

(4.)

(4.) *I know my Redeemer liveth*, i. e. as my Advocate and Interceſſor. For *Job*'s Faith did not only fix upon Chriſt as crucified, but as riſen; he did not only eye him as a bleeding Victim, but as an aſcended Conqueror; not only as treading the Wine-preſs of his Father's Wrath, but as pleading the Virtue of his own invaluable Sacrifice. Therefore when he ſpeaks of his Redeemer's living, he intends one of the great Ends of his living; that is, to intercede for his People, which is one neceſſary part of his Prieſtly Office. *But this Man, because he continueth for ever, hath an unchangeable Prieſthood: Therefore he is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come to God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make Interceſſion for them.* Heb. 7. 24, 25. Interceſſion for Sinners is as neceſſary to our Happineſs, as our Lord's making expiation for Sin: *He ſpoiled Principalities and Powers* upon the Croſs, *and made a ſhew of them openly.* Col. 2. 15. But he anſwers the Accuſations of thoſe malicious Spirits, now he is ſeated upon his Throne. 'Tis true, the available Plea in our Lord's Interceſſion is that of his own Blood; and the right he has to be an Interceſſor is founded on the Infinite Merit of his atoning Sacrifice: therefore He, and He only, hath a legal right to plead our Cauſe before God, who hath fully paid what we are indebted to him.

This by the way diſcovers the Vanity and Vileneſs of thoſe of the *Roman* Faction, who apply themſelves to other Interceſſors beſides the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; invocating the Holy Angels, the Bleſſed Virgin the Mother of our Lord, and ſome imaginary Saints of their own departed. And to excuſe this horrid Impiety, they diſtinguiſh between a Mediator of Redemption,

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demption, and a Mediator of Interceſſion; which will preſently appear to be a diſtinction without a difference: for if the right of Chriſt's Advocateſhip be founded in the Virtue of his Ranſom and propitiatory Sacrifice, as the Scriptures do abundantly declare, then 'tis as evident, as if written with a Sun-beam, that no one has right to be a Mediator of Interceſſion, but he that was a Propitiation for our Sins. And the Apoſtle ſays, *there is but one* 1 Tim. 2. 5. *Mediator betwixt God and Men, the Man Chriſt Jeſus.* Now if none are fit to ſuſtain the Character, and diſcharge the Province of an Advocate with the Father, but he that paid the Price of our Redemption; how uſeleſs will be the multiplied Mediators of Interceſſion, whom the Papiſts ſet up and apply to? And how much Diſhonour do they reflect on the Divine Mediator, who tho he trod the Wine-preſs of his Father's Wrath alone, and of the People there was none with him; yet will not ſuffer him to be alone in Interceſſion, but as much as in them lies would ſhare the Glory of that part of his Prieſtly Office amongſt ſome of the Heavenly Courtiers?

I ſhould now proceed to the Second general Head of Diſcourſe; but before I enter upon that, I ſhall juſt mention two or three Inferences, that are naturally deducible from what I have ſaid.

1. From *Job*'s Faith in the Redeemer, I infer, that thoſe that went to Heaven before the Incarnation of Chriſt, were ſaved by his Blood, as well as thoſe that have died ſince his Exhibition in the Fleſh. The Seed of the Woman was immediately promiſed upon the Fall of Man; and all the Sacrifices under the Law were but

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but Shadows and Types of Chriſt, the great expiatory Sacrifice. Thus he is ſaid to be *a Lamb ſlain from the Foundation of the World*; that is, ſays an excellent Author, federally not actually, imputatively but not really, ſententially in the acceptation of the Judg, tho not executively in the enduring of his Paſſion. Rev. 13. 8. *Mr. Charn.*

And indeed Chriſt's Blood being the moral Cauſe of our cleanſing from Sin, might be effectual before it was actually ſhed: for tho all natural Cauſes be before their Effects, it is not ſo with moral ones. If I am to redeem a Perſon from Slavery, and promiſe a certain Sum for his Redemption; upon the Credit of my Promiſe he may be actually redeemed, tho the Price be not paid till ſome Years after: this is eaſily applied to the caſe in hand.

Chriſt having ingaged to the Father to make a compleat Satisfaction to Divine Juſtice for the Elect, upon the Credit of the Redeemer's Promiſe, Believers under the Old Teſtament were juſtified and ſaved the ſame way as we are under the New; only they believ'd in the *Meſſiah* to come, and we look back upon him as having ſuffered.

2. From what has been ſaid, I infer the poſſibility of Aſſurance. *Job* knew and was aſſured that his Redeemer lived. Now that which has been, may be. *Job*'s Faith ſurmounted the Fear of Death; he looked not into the Grave, but through it, and beyond it, to the Redeemer, that had diſarmed Death of its Sting and Poiſon. I do not now ſpeak of an *Objective*, but a *Subjective* Aſſurance, *viz.* a Saint's certain, well-grounded, and full Perſuaſion of his own Intereſt in Chriſt and Right to Heaven; which concurs with the Experience of the Children

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Children of God in every Age. The Apoſtle *Paul* for himſelf, and in behalf of the Saints that were contemporary with him, ſpeaks fully to this matter. *We know that if our earthly*
2 Cor. 5. 1. *Houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a Building of God, an Houſe not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.*

Not that we are to imagine, that all the Heirs of the Heavenly Glory have ſuch a certain Knowledg and full Aſſurance, that when their Immortal Spirits are diſlodged from their earthly Tabernacles, they ſhall enter into the Heavenly Habitation. For ſome very eminent Saints have walked in Darkneſs, accoſted with Doubts, without any Light of ſubjective Aſſurance at all. But I ſay, this kind of Aſſurance is attainable in this Life.

I know the Papiſts object to this Doctrine, that there was ſomething extraordinary in the Aſſurance of *Job*, and *Paul*, and other excellent Perſons mentioned in Holy Writ; therefore they ſay 'tis impoſſible that ordinary Chriſtians ſhould ever attain in this Life to a certain Knowledg and full Aſſurance of their own Salvation.

To which many things might be return'd, but I ſhall but briefly ſuggeſt what follows in a general way, *viz.* That it is the laſt degree of Folly to riſe up againſt Fact; for there are many ordinary Chriſtians in this Day, that have a bright unclouded full Aſſurance of their own Salvation. But further, let me add, that none of the Prophets, Patriarchs or Apoſtles, could boaſt of a better Title to Heaven, than every ordinary true Chriſtian has, *viz.* the Righteouſneſs of the Mediator; and therefore (as our Divines have obſerved) the Apoſtles aſſert their own Aſſurance upon Grounds common to all the

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Faithful. And ordinarily when they mention themſelves and their own Aſſurance, 'tis in conjunction with other Chriſtians, as the Scriptures in the Margin do evince. Finally, tho the Apoſtle *Peter* (by the Church of *Rome*) is unreaſonably raiſed to a Supremacy above the reſt of the Apoſtles; yet I obſerve that this very Apoſtle, when he ſpeaks of his Title to Heaven, has the Modeſty to put himſelf upon the level with the reſt of the Saints. Simon Peter, *a Servant and an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, to them that have obtained like precious Faith with us, through the Righteouſneſs of God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* 2 Cor. 5. 1. 1 John 5. 19. 2 Pet. 1. 1.

3. Hence I infer, that Chriſt did exiſt before his Incarnation, and conſequently is God by Nature.

I know this Inference will not be allowed to be genuine by the Admirers of *Socinus*, who with him aſſert, that the Bleſſed Jeſus is but a mere Man, and that he had no exiſtence before he was conceived in the Womb of the Virgin *Mary* his Mother. An Opinion which ſaps the Foundation of Chriſtianity, againſt which the Teſtimony of *Job* does ſtrongly militate; for he aſſures us that in his time the Reedeemer lived; and the Redeemer himſelf ſaith, *Before Abraham was, I am.* So that the matter may be brought into a very narrow compaſs, whether we ſhall believe Chriſt, who is Truth it ſelf, who aſſerts he did exiſt before his Incarnation, or a blaſpheming *Socinian*, who aſſerts he did not. If he did exiſt before his Manifeſtation in the Fleſh, as my Text proves, then we have ſolid Grounds to believe from other Texts that he did exiſt from Eternity, and conſequently is God by Nature. I ſhall only cite one in the room of many, and 'tis that which thoſe of the *Racovian* way have abuſed John 8. 58.

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by a violent Interpretation. The Text is that
John 1. 1, 2, 3. of St. *John*: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the Beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* By *the Beginning* the *Socinians* understand the Beginning of the Gospel; *i. e.* when the Gospel began first to be published, then Christ did exist, and not before: which by the way proves he did exist before his Incarnation, the Gospel being first published in Paradise.

By *being with God*, they understand the Gospel of Christ, which he afterwards reveal'd to the World, was first only known to God.

He was God; *i. e.* say they, *God by Office. All things were made by him*, &c. This they refer to the Renovation of Men by the Gospel.

Which Interpretation I call *violent*, because several learned Men have prov'd, 'tis not agreeable to the Scope of the place, nor other plain Texts of Scripture; and that none of the Fathers, or other Writers of the Christian Church for 1500 Years, ever so explain'd it till *Socinus*. In this Passage it is evident, that by the *Word* we are to understand the *Son* of God, our Lord Jesus Christ; of whom 'tis asserted, That *he was in the beginning*, i. e. when things first began to be, he was: not that he *then* began to exist, but *then* already was, and had an Existence before any Creature was made. For what was in the beginning, did not then begin to be, but did exist before the beginning of Time; which, I think, plainly proves the *eternal Existence* of our Lord Jesus Christ. And then it follows, *The Word was with God, and the Word was God*; agreeable to what is affirm'd

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of the Perſonal Wiſdom, or the Son of God, in the Book of *Proverbs*, where perſonal Properties are often aſcrib'd to *Wiſdom*. And to expreſs the Eternity of Wiſdom, 'tis ſaid, *It was with God*. So here, *the Word was with God, i. e.* (ſaith one) it was always together with him, partaking of his Happineſs and Glory. To which our *Saviour* refers in his Prayer, *Glorify me with thine own ſelf, with the Glory I had with thee before the World was. The ſame was in the beginning with God:* Here the Evangeliſt plainly diſtinguiſhes betwixt God the Father, and God the Son: for tho he affirms that *the Word was God*, yet he ſignifies to us that it was not *God the Father*; for, ſays he, *the ſame was in the Beginning with God*, i. e. the ſame perſonal Word, the Son of God; who is afterwards call'd *the only begotten of the Father. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* " Which (as a * Learned Man remarks) could " not have been more emphatically expreſs'd, " than it is here by the *Evangeliſt*, after the " manner of the *Hebrews*; who when they " would ſay a thing with the greateſt force and " certainty, are wont to expreſs it both affirmatively and negatively: as, *he ſhall live, and* " *not die*; he ſhall moſt aſſuredly live. So here, " *All things were made by him, and without him* " *was not any thing made that was made*; *i. e.* " He made all Creatures without exception, " and conſequently he himſelf is not a Creature, becauſe it is evidently impoſſible that " any thing ſhould ever make it ſelf: But then

Prov. 8. 22, 31.

John 17. 5.

John 1. 14.

* Vid. *Archbiſhop* Tillotſon's *Sermons concerning the Divinity and Incarnation of our Bleſſed Saviour*, pag. 37, 38. *in* Octavo.

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" if he be, and yet was never made, it is cer-
" tainly true that he always was, even from
" all Eternity."

4. Thoſe that have a Redeemer in Heaven, have reaſon to believe that they ſhall perſevere on Earth. This Inference is very natural, and will appear ſo, if we conſider
John 14.19. what our Redeemer ſays himſelf; *Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo.* A Believer's Life does not depend upon his own free Will, but upon the Life of Chriſt in Heaven. That omnipotent Grace which caus'd us to ſpring out of the Grave, and reſtor'd Life to our dead Souls, can with a great deal of eaſe make us perſevere
Rom. 5. 10. in it. *He that reconciled us when we were Enemies by his Death, will much more ſave us by his Life.* As the firſt Act of Divine quickning is owing to his meritorious Death, ſo the continuance of that ſpiritual Life is ſecur'd by his prevalent Interceſſion.

The Covenant of Grace, in which every Be-
2 Sam. 23. 5. liever is intereſted, is an *Everlaſting Covenant, order'd in all things and ſure.* And the Advantage of being in ſuch a Covenant-Relation to God, is excellently expreſs'd by the Prophet:
Jer. 32. 40. *I will make an Everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their Hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me.* And our bleſſed
John 10. 27, 28. Saviour ſays, *That he gives to his Sheep Eternal Life, that they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of his hand.*

I proceed now to the

Second general Head of Diſcourſe, which is to ſpeak of *Job*'s Expectation, with reſpect to his Redeemer and himſelf; which he expreſſes in theſe

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theſe words: *That he ſhall ſtand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and tho after my Skin* (ſays he) *Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my Fleſh ſhall I ſee God: whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and mine Eyes ſhall behold, and not another, tho my Reins be conſum'd within me.* Wherein we make take notice of theſe five things.

1*ſt*, Of what *Job* ſuppoſes and expected, *viz.* his own Diſſolution by Death; *Tho after my Skin, Worms deſtroy this Body, tho my Reins be conſumed within me.*

2*dly*, Here is his Hope and Aſſurance of the Reſurrection of his Body; for after it had been once a Feaſt for Worms, he expected, in his Fleſh, to ſee God: which could not be, except that Body was raiſed.

3*dly*, Here is his ſteddy Faith concerning the Identity of the dying and riſing Body, *in my Fleſh*; that is, in my own Fleſh *ſhall I ſee God.*

4*thly*, Here is the Happineſs he was aſſured of, as conſequent hereupon; and that was his injoying the Viſion of God, *Whom* (ſays he) *I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and not another.*

5*thly*, The time when he expected this Happineſs, and that was, *at the latter Day.*

I ſhall ſpeak of each of theſe as briefly as I can, and ſhut up my whole Diſcourſe with a few Inferences.

1*ſt*, *Job* did expect his own Diſſolution by Death; *Tho after my Skin, Worms deſtroy this Body, tho my Reins be conſumed within me.* I will not ſtand to recite the various Readings of this Text, but take the words juſt as they lie in our Tranſlation, which are very expreſſive of *Job*'s expected Diſſolution of his Body; for tho [*Body*] be not in the *Hebrew* Text, yet it is evident he intends it: and it is not impro-

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bable but that he might take up ſome of his Fleſh, or point to his Body, when he ſaid, *Tho after my Skin, Worms deſtroy This*, pointing to his Body, or ſtretching forth his Arm, for ſo it is in the Original; *tho after my Skin, Worms deſtroy this*, i. e. *this Body.*

By Deſtruction, he doth not mean that the Matter of which the Body is compos'd, ſhall be annihilated; but that the Body being ſeparated from the Soul, its Beauty and Uſefulneſs ſhall become a Prey to Death, which corrupted in the Grave, ſhall be reduc'd to Duſt, its firſt Original, according to the Divine
Gen. 2. 19. Threat; *Duſt thou art, and to Duſt thou ſhalt return.* Therefore *Job*, in ſeveral places of this Book, is very expreſs in this matter;
Job 17. 13, 14. *If I wait, the Grave is my Houſe—I have ſaid to Corruption, Thou art my Father; and to the Worm, Thou art my Mother, and my Siſter.* He expected to be gnawn by Worms, and to become an Entertainment for the moſt contemptible Inſects. Therefore again, ſays he,
Job 21. 23, 24, 25, 26. *One dieth in his full Strength, being wholly at eaſe and quiet. His Breaſts are full of Milk, and his Bones are moiſtned with Marrow. Another dieth in the bitterneſs of his Soul, and never eateth with Pleaſure. They ſhall lie down alike in the Duſt, and the Worms ſhall cover them.* All Perſons, how diſtant ſoever they may be in their Way and Walk, in their State and Condition, yet at laſt they ſhall meet in the Grave, where all Diſtinctions are buried with the Confuſion of human Duſt. This was what *Job* expected, tho he had an Intereſt in the Redeemer; for the Righteous
Zach. 1. 5. muſt die as well as the Wicked. *Your Fathers, where are they? and the Prophets, do they live for*

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for ever? The Grave receives, without diſtinction, the Rich and Poor, the Strong and Weak, the Wiſe and Fooliſh, Young and Old, Holy and Profane; for thoſe of the greateſt Integrity are compos'd of the ſame frail Materials, and are liable to die of the ſame Diſeaſes as the vileſt of Men. This is ſo evident in Fact, that I need not go about to prove it. For altho we have had many Volumes written to preſerve Health, yet I think Mr. *Aſgil*'s profane Pamphlet was the firſt that was ever written to give Directions to avoid Death; an Attempt as vain as to meaſure Wind, to weigh Fire, or ſtop the Courſe of the Sun. For as the Records of the Grave are an undeniable Teſtimony of the Frailty of human Nature, ſo the Death of this Perſon, in a little time, will confute the Works of his Life, and give the lye to his abſurd Opinion. But then (ſays he) if I die, *I declare I die of no Religion.* No doubt but he ſpeaks the Truth; for he that lives without God in the World, will certainly die without any good Hope, and a ſtranger to all Religion.

Now altho what this Man has attempted be vain and idle, yet it will not be an improper Queſtion here to ask, Why the Righteous die, ſince the Satisfaction of Chriſt for them was, upon all accounts, compleat and perfect? I will only name a few things in anſwer to this, and ſo paſs on.

Firſt, The threatning of Death was not pronounc'd till after the Promiſe of the *Meſſias*; which ſhews, that God did deſign that the Righteous ſhould die as well as the Wicked, they being guilty of Original Sin as well as others. Now tho the *Meſſias* is promis'd, who was to ſa-

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tisfy for this Original Sin, as well as Actual Tranſgreſſion, and ſo to *ſave his People* from the *Second Death*; yet ſays he to *Adam*, and in him to his Poſterity and Deſcendants, *Duſt*
Gen. 2. 19. *thou art, and to Duſt thou ſhalt return.*

Secondly, Tho the Satisfaction of Chriſt be compleat, and he has purchas'd for his People a compleat Happineſs; yet ſuch is the Divine Conſtitution, that we muſt continue for ſome time here under a great many Weakneſſes, and Troubles, and Temptations. Now People may as well object theſe to the Satisfaction of Chriſt, as that of the Saints dying.

Thirdly, The Satisfaction of Chriſt has a great Influence into the Death that a Righteous Man paſſes under, inaſmuch as Death is alter'd in its Nature, it is diſarm'd of its Sting, and approaches him as a Friend. So that tho Believers muſt die as well as other Men, yet every thing in Death that was moſt hurtful, is taken away by the Lord Chriſt: Hence
Rom. 8. 1. ſays the Apoſtle, *There is no Condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus.* And the ſame Apoſtle puts Death among the number of the Believers Privileges; 1 Cor. 3. 22. *Death is yours.*

Fourthly, Sin is ſo interwoven with our Nature, that without throwing down the Fabrick of the Body, there is no putting an end to it. Death came into the World by Sin; but Sin is finiſh'd or aboliſh'd, as it were, by Death. We ſhall not wholly part with the Relicks of Sin, till that moment the Body and Soul is parted aſunder. When a righteous Man gives up the Ghoſt, his Sins expire with him; for his filthy Raiment drops from him with the Rags of his Mortality.

Fifthly,

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Fifthly, The Righteous, by being expos'd to Death, have the higheſt trial of their Graces, and the fitteſt ſeaſon to exerciſe them for the Honour of God the Redeemer. It hath been an Obſervation of the *Antients*, as well as of the *Moderns*, that *Faith*, and *Love*, and *Patience*, are declar'd in their moſt powerful Operations, in our encounter with Death.

Our Faith is tried to the uttermoſt, when the *Terrible of Terribles* ſtares us in the face, when his Forerunners ſeize our Vitals, and put the whole Body into a Convulſion and Agony.

Then is alſo the time for the perfecting of *Patience*, and exerting and evidencing our *Love* to God, by being willing to be at his diſpoſe in this World, ſo that we may injoy him in the next. *If it were as eaſy* (ſays one) *to get into Heaven, as to move from one Country to another; if it were only to ſtep up into* Elijah's *Chariot, and ſo drive away in an inſtant, Body and Soul together to the Regions above*; then theſe Graces would not be ſo much exercis'd and tried.

Sixthly, The Righteous muſt die as well as the Wicked, that they may be capable of being fully rewarded; for this dull, heavy, groſs Fleſh and Blood that we carry about with us, without refining, cannot enter into the Kingdom of God: this is ſo neceſſary, that thoſe Perſons that ſhall be alive when Chriſt comes to judg the World, muſt paſs under a Change equivalent to Death. Now herein the Wiſdom of God is wonderfully diſplay'd (as a * Learned Man remarks) that Death, which by the Covenant of Works, was the deſerv'd Penalty of Sin, by the Covenant of Grace

* *Dr.* Bates.

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ſhould be the Inſtrument of Immortality. Thus as *Joſeph*, by a ſurprizing Circuit, was brought from the Priſon to the Principality, ſo a Believer by the Grave aſcends to Heaven. Immortality in this Veil of Tears would not be deſirable, for I cannot conceive how a Perſon under the eſtabliſh'd Oeconomy and Order of things, could be compleatly happy here.

Seventhly, The Righteous being ſubject to Death, is a Method very proper to indear Chriſt to a Believer's Soul, and to add a ſprightly Accent to his Everlaſting Hallelujah's. *Chriſt is always precious to them that believe*; but he is never ſo much valu'd as when they are upon the Borders of Eternity, and in the Agonies of Death: then to think upon their Deliverer, then to hear the Father ſay, *Spare them from going down into the Pit, for I have found a Ranſom*; are words which, when attended with an Energy of Divine Power, have enough in them to revive thoſe that are fainting and dying, and cauſe them to fly from this World to the next, in Triumph, and with a Song. But,

Job 33. 24.

Laſtly, The Glory of the Redeemer will be the more Illuſtrious at the End of the World, by the raiſing of the Dead, to make up his magnificent Retinue, when he ſhall come *the Second Time without Sin to Salvation, and to be admired in all thoſe that believe.* Then for him to exert his Power to raiſe all theſe in an inſtant, will be much more for his Glory and Honour, than if from the time of our Saviour's Death to the End of the World, the Righteous ſhould have been caught up to Heaven, Body and Soul together, after they had tarried their appointed time upon Earth, one after another;

Heb. 9. 28. 2 Theſſ. 1. 10.

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ther; for this muſt have been done often in private and at Midnight: And it would not have been half ſo much for the Glory and Triumph of our Lord Chriſt, as it ſhall then be, when the Bowels of the Earth, and the Bottom of the Sea, ſhall throw up their Dead at his irreſiſtible Command and his Almighty Word. Then to ſee the Saints ſpring out of the Duſt like ſo many Stars at the Sound of the laſt Trumpet, how will this advance the Glory, and the Honour of the Redeemer! But I ſhall not ſtand to inſiſt any longer upon this Head, but ſhall go on now to the

Second thing, which is, *Job*'s Hope and Aſſurance of the Reſurrection of the Body; *Tho after my Skin, Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my Fleſh ſhall I ſee God.* I know there are ſome modern Interpreters, who do underſtand theſe Words of a metaphorical Reſurrection, as St. *Chryſoſtom* had done long before; yet I cannot conſent to it, for more reaſons than I have time to name. *Job* ſpeaks of ſeeing God in his Fleſh, and with his Eyes; and this was to be after the Worms had conſum'd his Body; which was an illuſtrious Specimen of his Faith, with reſpect to the Article of the Reſurrection: For if he had only meant a providential Reſurrection, then his ſaying that he ſhould *ſee God* with *theſe Eyes*, were no ſtrange thing. Therefore I rather take them in a proper and literal Senſe, as holding forth the Reſurrection of the Body; and of this mind were moſt of the * Antients, and particularly *Jerom* has theſe

* *Auguſtin, Cyprian, Gregory, Caſſiodorus, Hierom,* &c.

words:

Words: † No body ſo plainly ſpeaks of the Reſurrection after Chriſt, as *Job* does before Chriſt. And St. *Clement*, who was a Companion and Fellow-Labourer with St. *Paul* the Apoſtle, in an Epiſtle of his which he wrote to the *Corinthian* Church, does urge this very Text in *Job* to prove the Reſurrection of the Body. His Words are theſe: * And again, *Job* ſays, *Thou ſhalt raiſe up this Fleſh of mine, that has ſuffered all theſe things.*

Therefore taking it for granted that we are to underſtand the Reſurrection in a literal and proper ſenſe; I ſhall ſpeak a little to this Point. And,

Firſt, State my Notion concerning the Reſurrection.

Secondly, Aſſign ſome Arguments to prove it.

Firſt, State my Notion concerning the Reſurrection, in theſe following Propoſitions.

(1.) The Reſurrection is a Change, not a new Creation. If God ſhould annihilate all human Creatures, and make ſome other human Creatures out of nothing; this would not be to raiſe them from the Dead, but to create them anew. This indeed would be a Reſtitution of the ſame Species or Kind of Beings, that did exiſt before: but it would not be a proper Reſurrection, becauſe it is not a mere Change, but totally a new Production.

† Hieron. hæc habet: Nullus tam aperte poſt Chriſtum, quam iſte ante Chriſtum de Reſurrectione loquitur.

Vid. *Poli* Synop. Crit.

* Καὶ πάλιν, Ἰὼβ λέγει, Καὶ ἀναστήσεις τὴν σάρκα μου ταύτην, τὴν ἀναστήσασαν ταῦτα πάντα. Ep. 1. ad Cor. P. 66.

(2.) The

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(2.) The Reſurrection of the Dead is a Change that paſſeth upon a *material Subſtance*; it is only the Body that falls by Death, the Spirit returns to God that gave it. The Spirit is of an Immaterial, and therefore of an Immortal Nature: but the Human Body falling by Death crumbling into Duſt, the Divine Power cauſes a change to paſs upon that Duſt, by ranging and ordering thoſe Atoms and Particles of Matter, ſo as to compoſe for the Subſtance of it the ſame Body that died, though mightily changed with reſpect to its Qualities.

(3.) The Form of the Reſurrection conſiſts in the eſſential vital Union of this raiſed Body, with that very Rational Soul that formerly dwelt in it, and was united to it; from which Union, Life neceſſarily flows, and the very ſame Perſon may be ſaid to live again that formerly lived. And without this, tho a dead Body be quickned, 'tis not properly a Reſurrection: for ſuppoſe the Subſtance of a Body that fell by Death, was in its various Particles collected, ranged and rebuilt by Almighty Power; yet if that Body was informed by another Spirit, which was not united to it before, it could not be called a Reſurrection, becauſe it would not be the ſame Perſon, one eſſential conſtituent Part of it being wanting. Vide *Wolleb.* Compend. Theol. P. 182.

I ſhall not here trouble you with reciting and confuting the Opinions of the *Platoniſts* and * *Pythagoreans*, and ſome of the antient *Jews*, who have aſſerted the μετεμψύχωσις, or Tranſmigration of Souls, or the paſſing of Souls out of one Body into another, as well into the Bodies of *Plants* and *Brutes*, as *Men*.

* Vide *Dr.* Hody's Reſurrection of the (ſame) Body aſſerted.

(4.) The

(4.) The efficient Cauſe of the Reſurrection of the Dead, is the whole Trinity; tho in Scripture it is aſcribed to each Perſon in the Godhead. Our Saviour is ſaid to be
Act. 3. 15. raiſed from the Dead by God the Father; and he is alſo ſaid to raiſe himſelf. And 'tis alſo
Rom. 8. 11. attributed to the Holy Spirit: *But if the Spirit of him that raiſed up Jeſus from the Dead, dwell in you; he that raiſed up Chriſt from the Dead, ſhall alſo quicken your mortal Bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* In which Words we are told of the efficient Cauſe of our own Reſurrection, as well as that of our Saviour's. But eminently the Reſurrection of the Dead is
Joh. 5. 28, 29. attributed to the Son of God, as the Scriptures
Phil. 3. 20, 21. in the Margin do abundantly declare. Now our Bleſſed Lord may be conſider'd as the efficient Cauſe of the Reſurrection of the Dead, either *as God*, or *as Mediator*; in the firſt reſpect he may be conſider'd as the efficient Cauſe of the Reſurrection of the Unjuſt as well as the Juſt, but in the latter eſpecially of his Church; for when he himſelf aroſe from the Dead, it was as a publick Perſon; ſo his Reſurrection is both the Model, Exemplar and Pledg of ours. In a word, for this end Chriſt died, roſe and revived, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and Living.

(5.) One great end of raiſing the Dead, is to illuſtrate the Divine Perfections of Juſtice and Mercy, in puniſhing the Wicked, and rewarding the Righteous; both which
Dan. 12. 2. are expreſs'd by the Prophet: *Many of them that ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth ſhall awake, ſome to Everlaſting Life, and ſome to Shame and Everlaſting Contempt.*

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The Divine Attributes of Mercy and Juſtice at preſent, thro the promiſcuous Diſpenſations of Divine Providence, have, as it were, ſome dark Shades caſt over them; for the Righteous ſuffer, and the Wicked flouriſh, as if God *neglected* the one, and *incouraged* the other. But this ſeeming diſorder in the Divine Oeconomy will be ſet in a clear Light by the revival of the Dead, which will diſcover that all things were manag'd by a skilful Hand; for then *Juſtice* and *Mercy* ſhall both appear in their flaming Luſter.

(6.) Thoſe that ſhall be found alive at the ſecond Coming of Chriſt, ſhall paſs under a Change equivalent to a Diſſolution and a Reſurrection. So much St. *Paul* intimates in theſe words; *Behold, I ſhew you a Myſtery; we ſhall not all ſleep, but we ſhall all be changed:* i. e. We ſhall not all die, but we ſhall paſs under an Equivalent to what they ſhall do who do die. *For in a moment, in the twinkling of an Eye, (for the Trumpet ſhall ſound) the Dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible, and we ſhall be changed.* 1 Cor. 15. 51, 52.

(7.) The Righteous ſhall riſe in order of time before the Wicked. This the Apoſtle *Paul* ſignifies in more places than one: *But every Man in his own order, Chriſt the firſt Fruits, afterwards they that are Chriſt's at his coming.* 1 Cor. 15. 23.

Indeed ſeveral Perſons were raiſed from the Dead both before Chriſt's *Incarnation* and his *Reſurrection*; but then all theſe Perſons died again: whereas our Lord aroſe from the Dead Immortal, and ſhall never die more, and in that reſpect is the firſt Fruits of the Reſurrection. And with reſpect to the Righteous riſing before the Wicked in order of time, I collect it alſo from what St. *John* ſays, in the Book

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Book of the *Revelation*; where he ſpeaks of the *firſt Reſurrection*, and ſays, that on ſuch the ſecond Death ſhall have no Power. And the Apoſtle *Paul* to the *Theſſalonians* ſays, *That the Dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt.*

Rev. 20. 4, 5.

1 Theſſ. 4. 16.

Secondly, I am to prove that it is a matter moſt infallibly certain, it is an Event that will aſſuredly come to paſs. I know that ſome Philoſophers have laid it down as a Principle, *a privatione ad habitum non datur regreſſus:* That *there is no reſtoration of the ſame Being, after a total Corruption and Diſſolution of it.* But I may ſay to ſuch, as our Saviour ſaid to the *Sadducees*; *Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the Power of God.* For there is no Doctrine more expreſly taught in the Holy Scriptures, than that of the Reſurrection; and becauſe of my time, I'll cite but one Text in the room of many. *The Hour is coming, when all that are in the Graves ſhall hear his Voice, and come forth; they that have done Good, to the Reſurrection of Life; and they that have done Evil, to the Reſurrection of Damnation.* I ſhall only name a few Heads of Argument, and ſo paſs on.

Mar. 22. 29.

Joh. 5. 28, 29.

1. God hath appointed a Day in the which he will judg the World, which is an infallible Proof of the Certainty of the Reſurrection; for the World cannot be judged, unleſs the Dead riſe: nor is it rational to imagine, that at the general Judgment, naked human Spirits ſhould appear without their Bodies; ſince the Apoſtle expreſly ſays, that *we muſt all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

2 Cor. 5. 10.

2. Chriſt

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2. Chriſt hath not only redeemed the Souls, but the Bodies of his People: for tho the Body be an inferiour part of Man, yet it is an eſſential part, and the Law of God binds the whole Man, not the Soul only; for that the Obedience we yield to the Divine Law, is the Obedience of the entire Man: So if in any inſtance we violate the Law, the Guilt devolves upon the entire Perſon, whether it be a Sin of the Fleſh, or of the Spirit; I mean whether it be performed by the Inſtrumentality of the bodily Members, or ſomething of a very abſtracted Nature that paſſes only in the Mind. The Reaſon of this is very evident; for whether we ſerve God, or ſin againſt him, 'tis with the Soul and Body in conjunction: So that unleſs the Body riſe, neither the Recompences of rewarding Goodneſs can be fully beſtow'd, nor the Puniſhments of revenging Juſtice entirely executed. And why that Body which is redeem'd, in conjunction with the Soul, and hath been a Partner with it, both in ſerving of, and ſuffering for Chriſt, ſhould not be rais'd and made compleatly happy in Union with the Soul for ever, no reaſon can be aſſign'd.

3. That Doctrine which the Apoſtle *Paul* preached by Inſpiration, and ſupported by Scripture, and ſuffered for the preaching of, muſt needs be infallibly true; but this he did with regard to the Reſurrection: Acts 23. 6. *Of the Hope and Reſurrection of the Dead, am I called in queſtion.*

4. It is moſt certain, that the Covenant of Grace exceeds that of Works; which it cannot do, unleſs it be infallibly certain, that the Dead ſhall riſe and never die more:

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for if *Adam* had never ſinned, he might have lived for ever.

5. The Reſurrection of the Body may be argued from the Immortality of the Soul: For tho the Soul can ſubſiſt without the Body, yet it being created to inhabit in the Body, there is a natural deſire of Union: and therefore no Perſon, while Soul and Body is ſeparated, can be ſo fully happy as their Nature will admit of, and as they deſire to be; nor ſo compleatly miſerable, as when Soul and Body are united.

6. Another Argument may be drawn from the Reſurrection of Chriſt; and this is
1 Cor. 15. 12. the Apoſtle *Paul*'s great Argument: *Now if Chriſt be preach'd that he aroſe from the Dead, how ſay ſome among you that there is no Reſurrection of the Dead? q. d.* If Chriſt be riſen, then 'tis infallibly certain that the Dead ſhall
Ver. 13. riſe; for he adds in the next Verſe, that *if there be no Reſurrection of the Dead, then is Chriſt not riſen.* But the Apoſtle had before aſſerted and proved the Reſurrection of Chriſt, and from that he argues the Reſurrection of the Dead. Indeed this refers principally to the Members of his Myſtical Body, who ſhall be rais'd as united to him.

Laſtly, If the Dead riſe not, it muſt be either thro a defect of the Divine Power, or Divine Knowledg, or elſe it is a thing unneceſſary or impoſſible. There is no defect in the Divine Power, for God is Omnipotent; neither is there any in the Divine Knowledg, he being Omniſcient: for there is no Particle of a Human Body, tho it has receiv'd a thouſand different Modifications, but the Eye of God can diſtinguiſh to what Body it belongs, and

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and his Power range it in it's due place and order. Again, the Reſurrection infers no contradiction, therefore 'tis not impoſſible; there is no Contradiction in this, that that Duſt which was made out of nothing, which afterwards compos'd various human Creatures, being again reduc'd to Duſt, ſhould form the ſame Bodies that once they conſtituted. Now all things are poſſible with God, which do not involve in the very nature of 'em Contradictions. That the Reſurrection is abſolutely neceſſary, is evident; for without this the World cannot be judged, and ſo there can be no Rewards or Puniſhments.

But, *Thirdly*, we are to conſider *Job*'s ſteddy Faith concerning the *Identity* or *Sameneſs* of the *dying* and *riſing Body*; for ſays he, *in my Fleſh* (*i. e.* in my own Fleſh) *ſhall I ſee God.* Theſe words are very expreſſive, and ſignify to us that he believed that not only the ſame ſpecifical, but that the ſame *numerical Body* ſhould be raiſed that died; not only the ſame Body for kind, but for ſubſtance: and this matter might be eaſily eſtabliſh'd, had I time.

1*ſt*, We might argue from the ſignification of the word, which in propriety of Speech doth ſignify a Revival, or a raiſing up of ſomething that fell or died, or elſe it cannot be ſaid properly to be a Reſurrection. When I ſay there ſhall be a Reſurrection of the Dead, I muſt intend thus much, *viz.* That the Bodies of Men that have liv'd, and are dead, ſhall revive and riſe again. Moreover we may obſerve, that Death in Scripture is called *a Sleep*, and the Reſurrection *an awakening out of it: Many that ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth, ſhall awake.* And ſome render the words of the Text thus;

Job 19, 26. *And after I ſhall awake, tho this Body ſhall be deſtroy'd yet out of my Fleſh ſhall I ſee God.* Now this term would be wholly improper, if the very *ſame Body* that fell aſleep by Death, was not awaken'd in the Reſurrection.

2*dly*, From thoſe places of Scripture, that do inform us what the Repoſitories of the Dead ſhall give up; *Death, and Hell, and the Sea,* Rev. 20, 13. *and the Grave, ſhall give up their Dead.* Now if thoſe very Dead that were laid in the Grave, and in the Sea, were not ſurrendred, it would be no Reſurrection; and theſe Expreſſions would be improper and unintelligible: for if God Almighty ſhould produce new Bodies from other Matter, it could not be ſaid with truth, that either the Sea, or the Grave, gave up their Dead; for if either of them ſurrender up their Dead, it muſt be the very ſame Dead that were laid in 'em.

3*dly*, This might be further argued from the acceſſion of new Qualities that ſhall be beſtowed on the rais'd Bodies of the Saints. 1 Cor. 15. 53. About which the Apoſtle is very expreſs; *This Corruptible muſt put on Incorruption* (this very ſame corruptible Body) *and this Mortal muſt put on Immortality.*

4*thly*, We might argue from the Tranſlation of *Enoch* and *Elijah*, if they went into Heaven with their own Bodies, tho with different Qualities than what they had before; why ſhould any ſuppoſe that the Bodies of others ſhould be kept out of that place, and only new created ones admitted in?

5*thly*, The Reſurrection of our Saviour is a proof of this; our bleſſed Lord aroſe from the Dead with the very ſame numerical Body that hung upon the Croſs, and was laid in the

the Tomb. This no Man can deny who believes the Scriptures, which inform us that he *aroſe with the very print of the Nails in his Hands and Feet, and of the Spear in his Side.* There are many other very ſolid Arguments to prove the Identity of the dying and riſing Body, which I have not time to name, nor to ſtate the difference between the Reſurrection of the Juſt and Unjuſt, or to make any return to thoſe Objections that are framed by Scepticks and Infidels againſt this great Article of Faith; but muſt paſs on to the

Fourth thing, to conſider the Happineſs *Job* expected conſequent upon this; that was, his enjoying the *Viſion of God: Whom* (ſays he) *I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and mine Eyes ſhall behold, and not another.* God may be underſtood here abſolutely, for Father, Son, and Spirit, or perſonally for Jeſus Chriſt.

Now concerning this Viſion of God, I muſt but very briefly give you the following account.

(1.) The Views the Saints ſhall have of the Divine Majeſty in the other World, ſhall be intire and perfectly clear: for when *Faith* is turned into *Viſion, we ſhall ſee God face to face*; that is, we ſhall have the moſt clear, and bright, and full manifeſtation of his Favour and Love: the Scripture tells us, *We ſhall know, even as we are known:* [as] is a Note of Similitude here, not of Equality. I ſay, we ſhall have a bright and clear proſpect of the Divine Being, our Faculties and Powers ſhall be more capacious and refined, and the Divine Light ſhall ſhine with direct Beams upon us; ſo that the Soul cannot but have the moſt clear Viſion of God.

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Here might be conſidered diſtinctly,
The Object,
The Medium, and
The viſive Faculty or Power.

The *Object* is God: The *Medium* Chriſt. For I confeſs I am inclined to think, that the Glory that ſhall be exhibited to our *viſive Power*, ſhall be thro the glorified Humanity of our dear Redeemer. In a word, our Viſion of God ſhall be ſo clear, that we ſhall be paſt all danger of miſtaking concerning the Divine Nature; our Light ſhall be ſo bright and certain, that we ſhall be delivered both from Doubts and from Errors. In Heaven the great *Myſtery* of Godlineſs will be made *plain*, and we ſhall have a perfect view of the Scheme of our Redemption; there the dark Scenes of Providence will open, and the Volume of the Eternal Decrees ſhall be unfolded; and that which was a ſcandal to the Reaſon, and has often ſhaken the Faith of Chriſtians, ſhall appear without any veil of Darkneſs upon it.

(2.) This Viſion ſhall be aſſimilating: *It doth not yet appear* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *what we ſhall be; but this we know, that when he appears, we ſhall be like him: for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* *As for me* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *I will behold thy Face in Righteouſneſs: When I awake, I ſhall be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs.* * It ſeems to be equally neceſſary for our Happineſs and our Joy, to partake of the Glory of God, as well as to behold it. In Heaven we ſhall be made like God in Holineſs, and in Love;

1 Joh. 2.3.

Pſal. 17. ult.

* Vid. *Mr.* How's *Bleſſedneſs of the Righteouſneſs*, p. 68.

ſuch

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ſuch Flames ſhall be kindled in our Breaſts, that ſhall never languiſh or die.

(3.) It will be an appropriating ſight of God; as we ſhall *ſee him as he is*, ſo we ſhall *ſee him as our God:* there will be ſomething very peculiar in our looking upon him, which ſhall be with high ſatisfaction and extraordinary pleaſure. For Sight without Intereſt, as one well expreſſes it, is like the Light of a Glow-worm which is without any heat. Indeed one of the School-men places Happineſs in the intellectual part only, in the bare *ſeeing of God*; but there are others that place it in the Act of the Will, in the *enjoying of God:* but certainly it is the ſafeſt way to place it in both; for in Heaven they will never be divided.

(4.) This Viſion will be delightful and ſatisfying: *I ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake with thy likeneſs.* Pſal. 17. ult. How great muſt be the Joy, the Delight, the Pleaſure, the Satisfaction, that this ſight of God ſhall bring into the Soul? The Saints, while they remain in the Church Militant, have ſometimes an unſpeakable Joy ſprings up in their Souls: What Extaſy and Rapture ſhall they feel, when tranſlated to the Church Triumphant? How aimable and pleaſing are the Beams of the Sun here? But how (ſays one) would a Man be ſurpriz'd, if he were at the Spring of that Univerſal Fire, and ſaw how it riſes, and how it's manag'd? The Delight that a Child of God has *below*, is not comparable to that which he ſhall enjoy when *above*, and he makes nearer Approaches to the inacceſſible Light.

I do not doubt but the Queen of *Sheba* did very much admire the Wiſdom, the Glory,

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and the Pomp of *Solomon*, when her knowledg of him was only grounded upon Report; but when she saw his Conduct, heard his Wisdom, and beheld his Magnificence, she was thrown
1 King. 10. 5. into an Extasy, and the Prospect even ravish'd away her Soul; she faints with Admiration, and almost dies with Wonder, for there was no more Spirit in her. But alas! what was that to the surprizing sight which we shall have, if we get safe to Heaven! What an Extasy of Joy shall the glorified Saints have *in that Presence where is Fulness of Joy, and Pleasures for evermore?*

Lastly, Our sight of God will be perpetual and eternal. Here on Earth we have an imperfect View, we see God one day, and it may be the next he hides his Face from us in an angry Cloud; but in Heaven our sight of God shall never be interrupted, nor any Cloud obscure the Vision of his Face; there we shall see him thro an endless Eternity.

Thus have I, by the little that I have spoken, represented the Vision of God, as a wonderful Felicity, and a surprizing Wonder. And tho we shall understand it better by Enjoyment, yet our perpetual Wonder will mingle with our everlasting Hallelujahs.

Fifthly, Here is the time when *Job* expected this Happiness, and that was at the latter Day; at which time the Text assures us, that the Redeemer should stand upon the Earth. By *latter Day* I understand the same Period of time which in the New-Testament Language is called *the*
Job. 6. 39, 40. *last Day*: When that limited space of time which God hath set for his Peoples lying in the Grave, is elaps'd and run out, then shall the Redeemer descend upon the Earth, and cause the Members

Members of his Myſtical Body inſtantaneouſly to ariſe and ſpring from their Beds of Duſt. I know that ſome interpret theſe words of the *Redeemer's ſtanding upon the Earth at the latter Day*, to refer to our Saviour's Incarnation, and others to his Reſurrection: Some refer 'em to the Lord's appearing in the Air *over the Earth*. There are ſeveral other Senſes given of theſe words, which I do not omit reciting becauſe controverted amongſt Learned Men, but becauſe I have not time, neither think them proper for a popular Auditory. I proceed now to ſome brief Application.

Firſt, Hence we ſee of what neceſſity it is to get an Intereſt in the Lord Redeemer; for ſuch only have ground to expect this comfortable ſight of Chriſt. *Without Holineſs no Man ſhall ever ſee the Lord. Bleſſed are the pure in heart, for they ſhall ſee God.* Heb. 12.14. Mat. 5.8.

Secondly, What an acceſſion to the Riches of the Church, are the Writings of the New Teſtament, that caſt ſuch a Light upon the Doctrine of the Reſurrection.

Thirdly, Let what hath been ſpoken arm Chriſtians againſt the ſlaviſh Fears of Death. Death, tho a common Theme of Diſcourſe, carries Terror in the very ſound of it; and when thoſe that are at eaſe, and promiſe themſelves a *long* and *merry* Life, are admoniſhed of the *ſhortneſs* of their Time, by the Meſſengers of Death, they are like *Belſhazzar*, when he ſaw the Fingers of a Hand writing ſome myſtical Characters which he underſtood not: *His Thoughts troubled him, his Knees ſmote one againſt another, and his Countenance was changed.* Thus it is with an unprepared Soul at the approach of Death. Dan. 5.6.

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But bleſſed be God it was not thus with our *Deceaſed Friend*, who tho he had received the Sentence of Death in himſelf for a conſiderable time before the blow was given, yet he was got beyond the *Deſire of Life*, and above the *Fears of Death:* of whom I ſhall ſpeak nothing but words of Truth and Soberneſs. I had the benefit of his Acquaintance for about ſixteen years, and I always diſcover'd in him the moſt undiſſembled Piety. God touched his Heart betimes, he feared the Lord from his Youth, and devoted to Heaven the firſt and the beſt part of his time; and to me it was an Argument of his great Sincerity, that he embraced Religion when its Profeſſors were perſecuted and impriſoned; and what he himſelf ſuffered, was not a little from the hands of thoſe that had the power over him. When the Storm blew over, and Chriſtians immerged from the black Cloud that overſpread them, he ſtill retain'd his Caution, his Strictneſs, and his cloſe walking with God; always expreſſing, as far as I obſerv'd, a great deal of Modeſty and Humility in his Carriage and Conduct. He was one that paid a Deference and Reſpect to all that bore the Image of Chriſt, under what Denomination ſoever they paſſed: and I muſt ſay, that I always found him an affectionate, true and laſting Friend.

He was very ſound in the Doctrine of Chriſt's Satisfaction, and free Juſtification by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt alone, and the other great Articles of the Chriſtian Faith: and I think all that knew him muſt ſay, that abating human Frailties, *(for no Man liveth and ſinneth not)* his Converſation was ſutable to his Profeſſion:

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feſſion: So that he generally had a great calm within.

When I firſt viſited him in his laſt Illneſs, which was a few days before he underwent a terrible * Operation, which to mention is enough almoſt to chill our Blood: I ſay, when I firſt viſited him, I preſently enquired how things ſtood between God and his Soul. He told me all things were well, that he had a full aſſurance of the Love of God, and ſtrong Conſolation flowed into his Soul from the many great and excellent Promiſes which were impreſſed upon his Mind; and this he delivered with ſuch an air of Humility, and ſuch a mixture of Brokenneſs for the Remainders of indwelling Sin, as would even have diſſolved a Rock, and cauſed a Flint to flow. Moreover, he told me, he was ſo perfectly reſigned to the Will of God, that if God ſhould bid him chuſe for himſelf, he would refer it back to God to chuſe for him, whether Life or Death.

I then inquired whether the malicious Adverſary of Souls had not given him ſome interruption during his weakneſs. He ſignified to me, that he had been violently aſſaulted but a little before, but that Jeſus ſoon bruiſed the Devil under his feet.

I then enquired of him, that if the Lord ſhould remove him by Death, *whether he died in perfect Charity with all the World?* He readily told me he did; and he earneſtly wiſhed that he were capable of doing any thing that might ſerve the true Intereſt of the greateſt of his Enemies. Several other things paſſed, which

* *He was cut for the Stone a few days before his Death.*

were

were ſavory and ſolid, but I cannot eaſily recollect them.

When I viſited him again, about a day or two before his Death, returning to the ſame Queſtions, he told me all was well, that he longed to be at *home*; and the ſame day ſaid to his ſurviving Half, I am going, I am going to *my God*, and *your God*: for he could ſay with *Job* in the Text, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and tho after my skin Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my Fleſh ſhall I ſee God; with theſe Eyes of mine ſhall I behold him for my ſelf, and not for another.* And the Reaſon why he deſired that *this Text* might be preached upon, was, becauſe the Lord made uſe of theſe words firſt of all for his Converſion, in a Funeral Sermon he heard from them: and if his requeſt in this Matter, and the performance of it be ſucceeded by Heaven to the benefit of any, let the Glory be given to God.

And now to you his *ſorrowful Widow*, and you his *mournful Friends*, ſtop your Tears; for our Friend is not dead, but ſleepeth. Death approached him without a Sting, and he hath changed our Society for *Abraham*'s Boſom, where he ſhall never more be indiſpoſed by Sickneſs, or the diſquieting Tortures of the Stone. His Body we are going to commit to the Duſt, but his Soul is fled to the Regions of Eternal Day: *Therefore let us not ſorrow as thoſe without hope; for if we believe that Jeſus died, and roſe again, even ſo them alſo which ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him.*

The

The Natural Frailty of PRINCES *Consider'd;*

IN A

SERMON

Preach'd the 29*th* of *March*, 1702.

Upon the ſad Occaſion of the

Death of the late High and Mighty Prince

WILLIAM the Third,

King of *ENGLAND*, &c.

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To the Right Honourable

CHARLES

Earl of *Peterborough*, &c.

MY LORD;

HEN I had determin'd to comply with the Requeſt of my Auditors, in publiſhing this haſty Compoſure, Gratitude oblig'd me to inſcribe it to your Name: For tho the Sermon is not in a Dreſs fit to wait on your Lordſhip, yet knowing that Men of the greateſt Penetration *are of the moſt* extenſive Charity, *I was incourag'd not to let ſlip the firſt Opportunity to make a publick Acknowledgment to your Lordſhip, how ſenſible I am of the Honour your Lordſhip hath done me and my Friends on ſeveral Occaſions; chuſing rather to be cenſur'd for my Uncorrectneſs, than to fall under the Imputation of Ingratitude.*

My

My Lord, I do not, in the following Diſcourſe, attempt the Hiſtory of the late King William *the Third, but only glance on a few things, with much Simplicity, that aggravate the Nation's Loſs: A Loſs! vaſt as our Hopes, and general as our Grief.*

I am ſure your Lordſhip's unſhaken Loyalty for our late Sovereign of Glorious Memory, and your known Zeal for the Proteſtant Religion and the Liberties of Europe, *are ſo great, that they leave no room to doubt of your candid Acceptance of the meaneſt Performances ſincerely deſign'd to celebrate the Memory of the beſt of Kings, and to improve this ſad Loſs to God's Glory, and the Advancement of Practical Religion.*

That your Lordſhip and your Noble Family, as they are here the Patrons of Vertue, and Defenders of Liberty, may hereafter ſhine in Regions of Bliſs, is the earneſt Prayer of,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's very Humble

and Obliged Servant,

JOHN PIGGOTT.

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PSALM CXLVI. 3, 4.

Put not your truſt in Princes, nor in the Son of Man, in whom there is no Help.

His Breath goeth forth, he returneth to his Earth, in that very day his Thoughts periſh.

THE Angels never die, but are immortal as the Souls of Men. Death cannot enter the Celeſtial Palace, tho it makes frequent Viſits to the Courts of Princes. This lower World is the Place of its Reign, the upper Regions are free from its Tyranny. Here all that deſcend from the firſt *Adam*, however diſtinguiſhed by Titles of Honour, cannot be exempted from the Stroke of Death.

They that are *Titular Gods*, lifted up above the reſt of their Fellow-Creatures, *yet die like Men.* There is a vaſt diſtance betwixt a Prince and a Subject while living, but Death puts both upon a level: *They lie down alike in the Duſt,* Pſal. 82. 6, 7.

and

Job. 21. 26. *and the Worms ſhall cover them.* Death is that arbitrary Prince that overthrows all; *Your Fa-*
Zach. 1. 5. *thers, where are they? and the Prophets, do they live for ever?* They whom God hath honoured with the higheſt Dignity in the Church, have fallen by Death, as well as the Noble and Powerful Guardians of the State: The richeſt Princes, the greateſt Heroes, the brigheſt Examples of Virtue, muſt die as well as other Men. Death is a Monarch, that not only empties Cottages, but unthrones Princes, and on a ſudden changes *a glittering Palace* into *a dark Houſe of Mourning.*

A ſad Inſtance hereof we have lately ſeen, in the ſurprizing and much lamented Death of that High and Mighty Prince *WILLIAM* III. King of *Great Britain* and *Ireland.* What uſe is proper to be made of ſo dark a Providence, the Words of the Text inform us.

Put not your Truſt in Princes, nor in the Son of Man, in whom there is no Help. His Breath goeth forth, he returneth to his Earth, in that very day his Thoughts periſh. In which Words we may obſerve,

Firſt, A Dehortation, *Put not your Truſt in Princes, nor in the Son of Man.*

Secondly, The Reaſon upon which 'tis founded, and that is, the utter Incapacity of Princes to help and ſave thoſe that truſt in them; which the Pſalmiſt does amplify and demonſtrate by two Things.

1*ſt.* From their natural Frailty, they are ſubject to Death as well as other Men; *His Breath goeth forth, he returneth to his Earth.*

2*ly.* From the immediate Conſequence of this, as ſoon as ever he expires; *In that very Day his Thoughts periſh.*

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I shall (as God shall assist) discourse of these Things in their Order, and then make some Improvement suitable to this sad Solemnity, and that dark Providence we are now under.

First, I am to consider the Dehortation, *Put not your Trust in Princes, nor in the Son of Man.* I shall sum up what I have to say to this general Head in the following Propositions.

1. Men are very apt to place too great Confidence in crowned Heads; the Truth of this may be learned from the History of all Ages, and our own Experience concurs to confirm it. The Psalmist tells us, *That some trust in Chariots and some in Horses*, i. e. in the Strength and Power of their Governors. There is not any thing more common, than for People to put a mighty Confidence in a Prince; especially if his admirable Qualities have distinguished him from other Monarchs; if his Courage and Constancy have rendered him as successful in the Toils of War, as he has been deservedly famous for his Prudence and Piety in the Arts of Government. Psal. 20. 7.

We are apt to think, if Men of Power are on our side, *that our Mountain stands so strong it can never be moved*; and so flatter our selves with a long and unshaken Felicity, altho we see that the Fashion of this World is continually passing away, and its best and brightest Inhabitants daily taking leave of it. Now this springs from our Ignorance, and the narrow Compass of our Thoughts, together with the Carnality of our present Constitution, which (as one expresses it) strongly inclines us to depend upon Princes, either for the obtaining Psal. 30. 6, 7.

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what we desire, or the preventing what we fear. For we commonly view things in a false and deceiving Light, and from thence take an estimate of their Sufficiency and Strength; not considering that if we make an Arm of Flesh the Object of our Trust, the end of such a Dependence will be our Confusion. Yet thus it was with us generally of late, till God convinced us by *terrible Things in Righteousness*; for he shook the Throne like Mount *Sinai*, and we were on a sudden invelop'd with Clouds and thick Darkness.

2. Tho a Prince deserves ever so well from the State he governs, yet he is not absolutely to be trusted in. Whoever hath an entire Dependence upon any Creature on Earth, exposes himself to the Curse of Heaven. *Thus*
Jer. 17. 5. *saith the Lord, Cursed be the Man that trusteth in Man, and maketh Flesh his Arm, and whose Heart departeth from the Lord.* The *Jewish* Nation was often guilty of this Sin; I'll only mention an instance or two wherein God discovers his Displeasure against them for it. One is that of King *Asa*; *And at that time* Hanani *the Seer*
2 Chron. 16. 7. *came to* Asa *King of* Judah, *and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the King of* Assyria, *and not relied on the Lord thy God, therefore is the Host of the King of* Assyria *escaped out of thy hands.* Instead of trusting in God, he placed all his Confidence in the Strength and Power of his Confederates and Allies, which was a kind of renouncing God as an Object of Trust; and herein did his Heart wretchedly depart from the Lord. Again, how does God aggravate the Crime of
Isa. 31. 3. the *Israelites*, for their trusting in *Egypt! The* Egyptians *are Men, and not Gods.* So that, in short, to place an absolute Trust in Princes, is

to

to alienate the Rights of the Godhead; 'tis to rob the Deity of its Glory, and to turn a Prince into a provoking Idol of Jealousy. God cannot admit of Rivals in his Throne, for *he will not give his Glory to another.*

3. 'Tis not the Design of the Royal Psalmist, when he cautions against putting of our Trust in Princes, to depreciate that Faith and Credit, that Honour and Deference which is due to all good Kings from their own Subjects. The Psalmist himself was a great and a mighty Prince; and we cannot reasonably think, that he would recommend any disloyal Practices. What tho he tells us we must not trust in Princes, but rather advises to place our Confidence in Him, by whom Kings reign, as the best and safest course? Yet I say, this is not designed to lessen the Credit and Honour of Good Kings; 'tis not to render them contemptible in the Eyes of their People, as unfit to be regarded in the Civil Affairs of Life, and the Administrations of Government. The Psalmist cannot fairly be understood, as undervaluing *Kingly Dignity*, and representing Princes as useless Statues; but, as I intimated before, the Design of the Caution is to prevent such a Trust in them, as is exclusive of the Divine Providence.

A good Prince, as he is the special Care of Heaven, so he is an extraordinary Blessing to a People; 'tis said, *that because the Lord loved* 1 Kings x. 9.
Israel *for ever, therefore made he thee, King,* (speaking to *Solomon*) *to do Judgment and Justice.* The Honour that is due to a Rightful and Lawful Sovereign, involves in it all Duty and Allegiance, *viz.* the doing our utmost to support his Crown and Dignity, the putting the most candid Constructions upon his Actions, because

a Prince may have Reaſons for what he does which we are unacquainted with. The *Arcana Imperii* are a great way out of our ſight, who
Eccl. 10.20. are at a diſtance from the Throne: *Curſe not the*
Exod. 22. 28. *King, no not in thy Thought. Thou ſhalt not curſe the Gods, nor revile the Ruler of thy People.*

4. No Pretence of Allegiance or Duty will juſtify our Truſt in a Prince, whoſe viſible Conduct declares his Defiance to Heaven, and whoſe Arts of Government are level'd againſt the Laws of God, and thoſe of the Realm over which he preſides. Magiſtracy is an Ordinance of God; and we are bound by Divine Revelation, not only to *fear God, but to honour the King*. But if a Prince once break his Coronation-Oath, and invade the Liberties of his People, he is no longer a Prince, but a Tyrant; for certainly the People have as juſt a Right to the legal Government of the Prince, as the Prince has to the legal Obedience of the People. "And if our Monarchy (as * one ob- "ſerves) be in the very Frame and Conſtitu- "tion of it a limited Monarchy, and eſta- "bliſhed not upon the Imperial Laws of a few "viſionary Politicians, but upon the Funda- "mental Laws of its own making, or allow- "ing; then I muſt ſolemnly profeſs, that ei- "ther I am uncapable of judging what Senſe "and Reaſon is, or it muſt follow that an ab- "ſolute Monarch, a Prince not bounded by "Law, but governing only by the Arbitrary "Motions of his own Will, is no King "of our acknowledging; our Conſtitution

* *Dr.* Wake *in his Sermon preached at St.* James's Weſtminſter, *April* 16. 1696. *Pag.* 10.

"knows

" knows no ſuch Monarch, nor did we ever " oblige our ſelves to obey ſuch a one."

Upon theſe Principles proceeded the late happy Revolution in 88. and by theſe the Throne of our Gracious Sovereign Queen *Anne* is eſtabliſhed, tho derived to her by a long Succeſſion of Royal Anceſtors.

To cloſe this Head: If the greateſt Prince upon Earth commands that which is contrary to the Word of God, I am bound to perform my Duty to God, before my Allegiance to my Prince. And for this we have the Determination of the whole College of Apoſtles; *Then* Peter *and the other Apoſtles anſwered and ſaid, We ought to obey God rather than Man.* I proceed, Acts 5. 29.

Secondly, To conſider the Reaſon of the Dehortation in my Text, why we are not to put our Truſt in Princes; and this is founded on the Incapacity of Perſons of that Character to help us: *Put not your Truſt in Princes, nor in the Son of Man, in whom there is no Help.* If it be in their Power to relieve us, 'tis not always in their Inclination; and if they have a Will to protect and defend us, they may be deſtitute of Power. 'Tis true, Religious Princes, like the holy Angels, excel in Strength, when their Thrones are fixed in the Hearts of their Subjects; yet even then there are ten thouſand Things which we need, that they cannot beſtow. But I ſhall chuſe to conſider the Force of this, as 'tis amplified in my Text.

1. The Incapacity of Princes to help us is argued from their natural Frailty, they are ſubject to Death as well as other Men: *His Breath goeth forth, he returneth to his Earth.*

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'Tis a lofty Character which the Holy Ghoſt
Pſal. 82. 6. gives to Princes; *I have ſaid that ye are Gods, and that ye are all the Children of the moſt High.*
Ver. 7. Yet in the following Words he ſets them with the loweſt of the People, for he adds, *Ye ſhall die like Men.* Princes are diſtinguiſhed from others in the Quality of Living, but (as one obſerves) they are under the ſame hard and inflexible Neceſſity of dying; they cannot retain one Ray of the ſuperficial Luſtre of their Crowns, to enlighten the dark Shadow of
Pſal. 49. 17. Death: *Their Glory ſhall not deſcend after them.* A Court lies as open to Diſeaſes as a Cottage; Crowns and Scepters, Armies and Fleets cannot awe or bribe the King of Terrors. Surly and inexorable Death pays no more deference to a ſtrong and mighty Hero, crowned with Laurels, and uſed to Victories, than to a feeble Beggar that ſtoops almoſt to the Earth before he drops into it. *All Fleſh is Graſs, and the Glory of it as the Flower of the Graſs.* Death uſes no Ceremony, but ſeizes all without diſtinction, ruſhes upon a Crowned Head as ſoon as another: hence ariſes that Proverbial Expreſſion, *Strong as Death that ſubdues all, cruel*
Eccl. 8. 8. *as the Grave that ſpares none. There is no Man hath power over the Spirit to retain the Spirit, neither hath he power in the day of Death, and there is no Diſcharge in that War.* As Royal Duſt cannot be diſtinguiſhed from Common Earth, ſo Death in his Approaches pays no more reſpect to him that fills a Throne, than
Pſal. 89. 48. to one that languiſhes upon a Dunghil. *What Man is he that liveth, and ſhall not ſee Death? Shall he deliver his Soul from the Hand of the Grave?* Selah. If Dying be the way of all the Earth, and the Grave the Houſe appointed for

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for all Living; then Princes, as well as others, must walk in the Gloomy Valley, and retire to the dark Chambers of Death. Their Breath will go forth, and they must return to their Earth. Dust at first composed the Royal Fabrick, and to that it shall be again reduced. All Human Bodies are made of the same frail Materials; and the primitive Sentence, *Dust thou art, and to Dust thou shalt return*, respects the Kings of the Earth, as well as the Subjects over whom they reign.

Nay, the Moral Glory of a Prince will no more secure him from Death than his Civil Grandeur; for Good and Bad fall undistinguish'd. The meek *Moses* King of *Jeshurun*, as well as proud *Pharaoh* King of *Egypt*; Good *Josiah*, as well as wicked *Ahab*; Religious *David*, as well as impious *Saul*, have submitted to the same Fate. And now, how shall I pronounce the sad Word! Glorious *William* the Third is fallen by Death, as well as unhappy *James* the Second. And because of the natural Frailty of good as well as bad Princes, the Psalmist cautions against an absolute Trust in them: The Breath of Princes is in their Nostrils, as well as of other Men; and since they are thus subject to Change and Death, they are no way fit for an Object of our absolute Trust. For if our Dependence rest on a frail Creature, we may be disappointed at the very time that our Hopes are big, and our Expectations high. And this leads me to the second thing, which the Psalmist urges to enforce his Caution against putting an entire Trust in Princes, *viz.*

2. The immediate Consequence of their Death; *In that very day their Thoughts perish.*

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Not that we are to imagine that the Soul at Death paſſes into an unactive and thoughtleſs condition; that's a Notion contrary both to Reaſon and Revelation.

It's contrary to Reaſon; for this Principle ſuppoſes that the Soul either ſleeps or dies, which no Reaſon induces to believe, becauſe the Soul is immaterial, and conſequently immortal: That which is immaterial is not compounded of Parts; it has no corruptible Principles to render it capable of Diſſolution, as all mixt and material Beings are. Now if human Spirits are immaterial, 'tis impoſſible they ſhould die: Tho I doubt not but that God can annihilate them, yet to ſuppoſe that the Soul dies with the Body, is to ſuggeſt its Materiality; which is an Hypotheſis attended with many Abſurdities, for it affirms that Matter is capable of Cogitation; and what is the Conſequence of that, but that Effects may exceed the Cauſe that produc'd them? For how far does a noble Train of Thoughts exceed the moſt refin'd Matter, whether in Reſt or in Motion? If there be ſuch a thing as pure Intellection, or abſtracted Notions and Ideas of immaterial things, which depend not upon bodily Figures, it's impoſſible that theſe Notions ſhould be lodg'd in any Subject but that which is immaterial, and conſequently immortal: and if the Soul be immortal, and never dies, to be ſure 'tis active in the other State; for an unactive Spirit is a ſenſleſs Paradox. Moreover, it has been remark'd, that many People have had clearer Notions, and a cloſer way of reaſoning, juſt as their Souls have been looſening from their Bodies, than ever they had before. Now if the Soul be material, as ſome dream,

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dream, why does it not equally decline with the Animal Spirits, which are but refin'd Matter? Since Experience teſtifies the contrary, we may conclude from Fact, that when the Soul is perfectly ſeparated from this clogging Body, it enjoys the trueſt Liberty. This made *Heraclitus* ſay, that the Soul goes out of the Body as Lightning from a Cloud, becauſe 'tis never more clear in its Conceptions than when freed from Matter. 'Twas a Thought of this nature, that help'd to perfect the late Earl of *Rocheſter*'s Perſuaſion of the Soul's Immortality, *viz.* * "When Sickneſs had brought "him ſo near Death, and his Spirits were ſo "low and ſpent, that he could not move "nor ſtir, and he did not think to live an "hour; he ſaid his Reaſon and Judgment were "ſo clear and ſtrong, that from thence he "was fully perſuaded, that Death was not "the ſpending or diſſolution of the Soul, "but only the Separation of it from Mat-"ter."

But farther, as the Notion of the Soul's paſſing into an unactive State at Death is repugnant to Reaſon, ſo 'tis contrary to Divine Revelation. We read *of the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect.* Now tho the Perfection of departed Souls is not abſolute, yet it is a Perfection that cannot conſiſt with a *dead Unactivity.* How abſurd is it to imagine that the Spirits of juſt Men are in a dead Sleep, from their Entrance into Heaven to the time of the firſt Reſurrection, when they are again to unite Heb. 12. 23.

* *See his Life written by Dr.* Burnet, *now Lord Biſhop of* Sarum, P. 20, 21.

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with their Bodies? The Apoſtle *Paul* had certainly other Sentiments about human Spirits;
2 Cor. 5. 6. for he aſſerts, *That whilſt we are at home in the Body, we are abſent from the Lord.* Again,
Ver. 8. *We are confident, I ſay, and willing rather to be abſent from the Body, and to be preſent with the Lord.* From theſe places 'tis evident, that the Apoſtle believ'd that human Spirits did exiſt in a ſeparate State, and that ſuch as were united to Chriſt, did paſs into his bliſsful Preſence, immediately upon diſlodging from their Bodies. And ſurely they cannot be unactive under the Influence of his Glory; the Views they have of his exalted Human Nature, make them like him: and this Likeneſs muſt needs produce Delight, and this Delight Wonder, and this Wonder the moſt Seraphick Ardours, and profound Adorations. Thus much may ſuffice to reſcue this place from a Miſconſtruction, into which a curſory or unwary reading of the Phraſe might probably lead leſs thinking People.

I ſhall therefore now give you the juſt Import of theſe words, *In that very day their Thoughts periſh*; *i. e.* All the Deſigns they had form'd for this World, either reſpecting themſelves or their People; they can no longer purſue the Plans they have laid, for the other State will furniſh them with a very different Set of Thoughts. So that the force of the Argument lies here, That ſince Princes are as frail as other Men, and their Deſigns die with them, their Thoughts vaniſh with their Breath; 'tis unreaſonable to put an abſolute Truſt in ſuch dying Creatures.

How many of the moſt excellent of the Earth has God remov'd by Death in the midſt of

of their Work, before they could finiſh the Deſigns they had form'd?

Moſes the Captain of *Iſrael* dy'd in the Wilderneſs, before he had conducted the *Iſraelites* into the promiſed Land.

Good King *Joſiah* died before he was forty Years of Age, and in the midſt of his excellent Purpoſes to reform and exalt his Kingdom.

And *Edward* the Sixth of *England*, whom ſome have call'd our *Engliſh Joſiah*, was taken off very early, while carrying on the moſt glorious Deſigns to make *England* a happy People.

Julius Cæſar was taken off by Death, while he was forming a deſign to epitomize the voluminous Works of the Learned *Grecians* and *Romans*; together with other Noble and Great things for publick Good.

Guſtavus Adolphus, that mighty General and true Friend to the Proteſtant Intereſt, was remov'd early by Death, before he was 38 Years of Age, and at a time when the Proteſtants had vaſt Expectations from him.

And thus it was with our late Sovereign of glorious Memory; he was taken away by Death, when the Eyes of all *Europe* were upon him, waiting for the happy Effects of his Prudent Counſels, and the Succeſs of his Victorious Arms. Yet (bleſſed be God) we have ſome good hope, that his Thoughts will not ſo vaniſh with his Breath, but that his excellent Model, made from Axioms calculated to the Honour and Intereſt of *Europe*, will be purſu'd by his Illuſtrious Succeſſor in the Throne; who has already given the utmoſt Aſſurance to make good all the Alliances into which his late Majeſty

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Majeſty enter'd with Foreign Princes, and to defend our Religion and Liberties.

Indeed this is a mighty Relief under our unſpeakable Loſs; a Loſs we muſt needs deplore! O what a Prince, what a mighty Man is fallen in our *Engliſh Iſrael!* Can we forbear to mourn our Loſs? No ſurely, it would argue a wretched Stupidity not to be affected with ſo ſad a Providence. Surely nothing but a Stoick, or a ſworn Enemy to the Proteſtant Religion, can refrain from adding a Voice to the Conſort of Mourners, when the Death of ſo excellent a Prince has delug'd with Sorrow ſo many Kingdoms and States. It has been the Cuſtom of all Nations, in all Ages, to uſe ſome ſolemn Significations of Mourning upon the Death of good Princes: When *Moſes* the Servant of the Lord died (who was a King in *Jeſhurun*) the Children of *Iſrael* are ſaid *to weep for him in the Plains of* Moab *thirty days.*

Deut. 34. 8.

When King *Hezekiah* ſlept with his Fathers, all *Judah* and the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem* did him Honour at his Death. And we read that upon the Exit of good *Joſiah*, all *Judah* and *Jeruſalem* mourn'd; and this Mourning was ſo deep, ſo ſolemn, and ſo laſting, that in a Book writ about an hundred Years after, it is ſaid they continued their Mourning for him to that day: and when any extraordinary Mourning happen'd, it was ſaid to be like the Mourning of *Hadadrimmon* in the Valley of *Megiddon*, which was the Mourning occaſioned by the Death of good *Joſiah.*

2 Chron. 32. 33.

Again, the Hiſtorian tells us, that when *Conſtantine* the Great died, the Tribunes, the Centurions, and the whole Order of Judges and Magiſtrates greatly lamented his Death.

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And certainly we of theſe Kingdoms have great occaſion of Sorrow, if we conſider but a few things with reſpect to that Excellent Prince whom Death has raviſh'd from us. I confeſs I ſhall labour under great Diſadvantages, in ſpeaking concerning our late Sovereign, becauſe 'tis impoſſible I ſhould relate thoſe Matters which they can, who had the Honour to attend his Perſon.

Yet ſuffer me to ſay a little, tho 'tis very little that I can ſay; for 'tis a Work would become the beſt Orator to pronounce the Character of *William* the Third: Whoſe Name will be renowned from Generation to Generation, for He *deſerves to be had in everlaſting Remembrance.*

Pliny eſteem'd them happy who wrote things worthy to be read, but prefer'd thoſe in the degree of Felicity who acted things worthy to be written: And ſurely no Prince's Actions did more deſerve to be written on durable Monuments than the Actions of *William* the Third; a Name that ſhall ſhine in the Records of Fame, and be read in the *Britiſh* and *Dutch* Annals as long as Honour, Courage, Juſtice, Clemency, and Religion ſhall be thought to have any Luſtre, or find any Countenance in the World. He was the Active and Sprightly Genius of *Europe* (for ſo he was call'd abroad) the Glory of Crown'd Heads in this Age, and ſhall be a laſting Wonder in Ages to come; He was the Darling of Providence, the very Man that God delighted to honour.

I cannot now ſpeak of the Royal Stem from whence our late Sovereign ſprung, and of the Glory and Renown of the Illuſtrious Family of *Naſſau*, of which Stock were the principal Defenders

fenders of the Proteſtant Religion in the *Low Countries* for the laſt Ages.

I ſhall but briefly glance on a few things with reſpect to the late King *William*.

Firſt, In regard of the Time and Manner of his Acceſſion to the Crown.

Secondly, I ſhall mention ſome things remarkable during his Reign.

Thirdly, Take notice of ſome ſpecial Circumſtances attending the time of his Death.

Firſt, We are to conſider the Time and Manner of his late Majeſty's Acceſſion to the Crown: It was when a Deſign was form'd to fetter our Liberties, and extirpate our Religion; when all things were almoſt ripe and ready for Execution, our Feet being in the Snare before we perceiv'd it was ſpread for us: the flattering Promiſes of a Popiſh Prince having ſhock'd our common Prudence, ſo that our Enemies began to triumph and to inſult us as they had done our Laws. Even at this deſperate Juncture did our late Sovereign enterprize our Deliverance, and hazard his own Perſon to ſave a ſinking Nation, and to relieve the Reformed Churches. And nothing could diſcourage this Prince, tho many Difficulties met him in this Noble Undertaking; for God was on his ſide, and ſtruck his Enemies with a panick fear, ſo that they were ſuddenly ſcatter'd as Duſt before the Wind, and the People of *England* were prepar'd to receive him with Acclamations of Joy. Providence conducted him to the Throne of theſe Realms, not through a Sea of Blood, for we were not conquer'd, but conſented, in the Repre-

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Repreſentative Body of the Nation, to receive *William* and *Mary* as our Rightful and Lawful Sovereigns. Now as the Time and Manner of the late King's Acceſſion to the Crown did endear him to us, ſo it deeply aggravates our Loſs, and gives a terrible Accent to our Sorrows. But,

Secondly, Let us glance on a few things very remarkable during the Reign of the late King *WILLIAM*. Immediately after his Settlement on the Throne, he enter'd into a War with *France*, and in his *own Perſon* engag'd from time to time at the Head of his Army, where he always ſignaliz'd himſelf for his *Prudence* and *Courage*. He was as well acquainted with the difficult Arts of Government, as the noble Stratagems of War; ſo that I ſhall not ſcruple to ſay of him, that he was the Greateſt Stateſman, as well as the moſt Renowned Hero of the Age.

What Difficulties did he ſtruggle through, and vanquiſh at the *Boyn*, where his Preſervation was equal to his Succeſs, *both of them great?* So that what our King did there will be reckon'd by Poſterity amongſt the moſt remarkable Atchievements of War; for in that Expedition it was very viſible, *God had girded him with Strength unto Battel.* And in many other Inſtances did his watchful Providence diſcover its care of his Majeſty's Perſon, preſerving it by a Succeſſion of Wonders, againſt the Inſtruments of Death abroad, as well as from the murdering Hands of bloody Aſſaſſins at home. I forbear to recite the Battels our Prince fought, and the Victories he won; his regulating the debas'd Coin of the Nation at

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a very critical and hazardous Juncture; the Honourable Peace he procur'd, and the Check he gave to the Inſolence and Pride of an Arbitrary Prince, who was aſpiring after Univerſal Monarchy: not doubting but that you'll meet with all theſe in his Hiſtory. Indeed if his pretended Friends ſhould be ungratefully ſilent, and forget him after his Death, his Enemies will record his Vertues, and ſpeak of his Valour. What Age ever produc'd a Prince of ſuch Mildneſs and Lenity? a Prince that did *Juſtice* without *Revenge*, that ſhew'd *Mercy* without *Weakneſs*, was *kind to the unthankful, heaping Coals of Fire upon the heads of his Enemies.* He was the Refuge of thoſe Proteſtants that fled for their Religion, as well as the *common Father* of his *own People*; which he eminently diſcover'd by his extraordinary Clemency and great Moderation, carrying it with an even hand betwixt contending Parties, ſo that he deſerv'd to be call'd, *The Healer of our Breaches, and the Reſtorer of Paths to dwell in:* for he well knew that *domeſtick Diviſions* would put us into greater danger than a *Foreign Power.*

But further, like one that lov'd his People, and had a deep Concern for their Happineſs, he did conſtantly in his excellent Speeches from the Throne, recommend Reformation of Manners, thereby *ſcattering away Evil with his Eyes.*

And how great Concern did this Prince diſcover for Poſterity, by his earneſt and ſeaſonable recommending to the late Parliament the Succeſſion to the Crown in the Proteſtant Line, thereby extinguiſhiug the hopes of a *Suppoſititious* Heir, to make the clearer way for that *admirable Princeſs* that now fills the *Throne?* So that however ſome Male-contents have been

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uneaſy under his Adminiſtration, yet *the Generations to come will call him Bleſſed*; becauſe if the Religion and Liberties of *England* be tranſmitted to late Poſterity, the Poſſeſſors thereof will be indebted for them to the Care of this excellent Prince, under the Providence of God. For what excellent Laws have been enacted during his Reign, and what care did he take to improve his Intereſt and Time in concluding Alliances with Foreign Princes and States, in order to reduce the exorbitant Power of *France*, that *England* might ſtill hold the Ballance of *Europe*? So that, in ſhort, he has rais'd the Honour of the *Engliſh* Nation, and acquir'd to himſelf ſuch a juſt Eſteem abroad, that all Foreign Princes and States have reckon'd him as the Center and Soul of our whole Alliance, as well as the Arbiter of *Europe*. But alas! this Great Prince in the midſt of his Noble Deſigns has his Health impair'd by Diſtempers, and his Body ſinks down under the uncommon Weight of a fatiguing Reign into the Duſt of Death: and this leads me to conſider,

Thirdly, The Circumſtances that attended the Death of the late King *William*, which together with the things I have already mention'd, greatly aggravate our Loſs, and juſtify our ſolemn Mourning.

He was taken away at a time when his Experience had to a very great degree ripen'd him for Counſel, and cultivated his excellent Notions of Government: At a time when we wanted his Direction and Conduct: At a time when we hop'd God had much Work for him to do, and we had rais'd Expectations of his enter-

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prizing Great things: At a time when we needed him to go forth in the Head of our Armies. But alas! alas! on a ſudden we loſe our King and our Hopes together. Lord, what have we loſt!

A Prince that deliver'd us from Popery and Arbitrary Power.

A Prince that was for reforming our Land, as well as fighting our Battels.

A Prince that had every thing in him to render his Government a Happineſs to all his Subjects.

A Prince that prudently ſway'd the Scepter of Peace, as well as courageouſly manag'd the Sword of War.

A Prince whoſe mild Government proclaim'd him to be the brighteſt Example of Clemency and Good-Nature.

A Prince who had the greateſt Honour, and the largeſt Intereſt in all *Europe*.

A Prince endear'd to us by the Hazards he ran, and the Deliverances God wrought for him.

A Prince that was the Terror of the Papal Hierarchy.

A Prince (if I may ſay ſo of any ſince the Exit of good *Joſiah*) that was the Breath of our Noſtrils, the Anointed of the Lord, the Delight of our Eyes, and the Joy of our Hearts.

A Prince that adorn'd the Crown he wore, while we were bleſt with the happy Influence of his Government; but the Shadow of Death has ſtain'd our *Engliſh* Glory.

I cloſe this rude and imperfect Character with only adding, that bleſſed be God, He that did not fear Death in the *Field*, was as undaunted when it approach'd him in his *Palace*;

lace; for I am well assur'd by those that had the Honour to be near him, that He died with the greatest Resignation, full of Charity and Peace. What Use is proper to be made of this Subject and Providence, I shall now briefly suggest, and so conclude.

1. Beware you do not murmur at the Divine Conduct, or pass any rash Censure on the Providence of God. God's Ways are always *equal*, but his Dispensations are sometimes *dark*. It will be a desperate Conclusion for any to say, *God has forsaken this Earth; and that all things roll under the Sullenness of Fate, or the Giddiness of Chance.* For 'tis certain he that rules amidst the *Armies of Heaven*, does still govern amongst the *Kingdoms of Men*. Our Blessed Saviour assures us, *that the Hairs on our Heads are all numbred.* Luke 12. 7. And if a Hair cannot fall from our Heads without Heaven's Permission, much less can a Crown'd Head drop into the Dust without the Allowance of the Supreme Governor. If the most minute things are under the providential Care of Heaven, much more Great and Good Princes, who are *God's Ministers* upon Earth. And it must be confess'd, that when such are remov'd in the midst of their days, 'tis like the *Sun's going down at Noon, and the darkning of the Earth in a clear Day.* Amos 8. 9. Something like this have we seen in the Death of our *excellent King*; yet it becomes us to be silent, because we have sinned. Thus the Royal Psalmist behav'd himself under pressing Trials; *I was dumb, and open'd not my Mouth, because thou didst it.* Psal. 39. 9. Many of the Providences of God are very obscure, and the Methods he takes seem to us to be very intricate and perplex'd; yet there is great reason to be calm and resign-

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ing, since whatever his infinite Power hath produc'd, his steddy and unerring Wisdom governs. The People of God shall be happy in the *end*, tho the Reasons of many *intermediate Events* are conceal'd from them *in the way*.

Psal. 104. 3. *God maketh the Clouds his Chariot: He walketh upon the Wings of the Wind.* His Providential Motions are so mysterious and dark, so sudden and swift, that we are uncapable to view them in their Extent; we can only *gaze, wonder, and resign.* And there is great reason for our Re-

Psal. 97. 2. signation to God; For, tho *Clouds and Darkness are round about him, Righteousness and Judgment are the Habitation of his Throne.* Tho the Reasons of the Divine Procedure are far out of our sight, yet a silent Submission becomes us, because he in whose hands are the Reins of Government cannot err. Moreover, the wise

Prov. 25. 2. Man tells us, *'Tis the Glory of God to conceal a thing.* The Glory of the Divine Nature is exalted, by being incomprehensible to us; and so the inexplicable Methods of the Divine Providence, the Unsearchableness of God in his Dispensations, raise the Glory of his *Wisdom* and *Sovereignty*; which is a powerful Reason for our ready Resignation.

Again, if there were not some dark Dispensations of Providence, we should not have such an Opportunity as these afford for the Exercise of our suffering Graces. The Probity and Patience of *Job* would not have shone with so bright a Lustre, nor have render'd him so famous in after Ages, if there had not been great Obscurity in the Providences he was under: his not knowing what God was about to do, gave him occasion to exercise an *invincible Constancy*, and an *unwearied Patience.* To close this Head,

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let us always remember, that we are but of Yeſterday, and know nothing: That God's Judgments are unſearchable, and his Ways paſt finding out. That Precious and Valuable Life, that was ſo ſoon ended, was meaſur'd out by the Infinite Wiſdom of God, who for Reaſons unknown to his Creatures, lengthens or ſhortens the Lives of Princes at pleaſure. *What God does now, we know not, but we ſhall know hereafter.* For the Days are approaching wherein the Myſteries of Providence ſhall be unveil'd, and we ſhall ſee that the Obſcurities thereof, like Shades in Painting, ſet off the Beauty with the greater Advantage.

2. Let us ſtand in awe of Him, in whoſe Hands are the Keys of Death and Hell. *God's Throne is plac'd in the Heavens, and his Kingdom ruleth over all.* He has an abſolute Sovereignty over Angels and Men: He killeth and maketh alive; he woundeth, and his Hands make whole. With what Reverence and Awe ſhould we think of this mighty *Jehovah?* who can add Years to our Days, or cut them off in the midſt at his pleaſure; who is Lord of all our Time, and in whoſe hands alone are the Iſſues from Death. Fear to offend this God by the leaſt Sin, for 'tis the abominable thing that his Soul hates. In a word, never diſpute his Authority, but obey his Commands, leſt he purſue you with the Terrors of his Wrath, for deſpiſing the Offers of Peace; leſt he frown you into a bottomleſs Lake of Fire, for rejecting boundleſs Rivers of Pleaſure; and bind you with the Chains of an eternal Wrath, for trampling on the Blood of a compaſſionate Saviour.

3. Let us not only mourn our Loſs in the Death of our Excellent King, but mourn for thoſe Sins with a peculiar accent of Grief, that have occaſion'd it. May this Stroke awaken all *Europe*, and inſpire all that bear the Chriſtian Name, to take up Reſolutions of Reformation in the ſtrength of Divine Grace. God's Hand has been lifted up; may the Inhabitants of this and the neighbouring Lands learn Righteouſneſs. *God ſometimes ſends evil Kings in his Anger, and takes away good ones in his Wrath: And for the Iniquity of a Land, many are the Princes thereof.* There is ſcarcely any Affliction that befals a People, but has been occaſion'd by Sin. 'Tis Sin that brings Hoſts of Diſeaſes like Locuſts, to prey upon, and deſtroy the Bodies of Men. 'Tis Sin that kindles a Train of liquid Fire in the Blood, to ſcorch us in a Fever; and that produces large quantities of Water, to drown us, as it were, with a Dropſy. 'Tis Sin that brings publick Calamities on a State, and that ſpreads Miſery and Deſolation over the face of the Earth: *Thus a fruitful Land becomes a Wilderneſs, for the Iniquity of thoſe that dwell therein.* Now ſince Sin is the ſad cauſe of our Miſeries, and particularly of that dark Providence under which we groan; let us not forget to mourn for our Perſonal as well as National Sins. Who can forbear to drop a few Tears, and ſend ſome Sighs after our Excellent Prince? But Rivers of Tears ſhould run down our Eyes for thoſe Sins that have provok'd God to remove him from us.

4. Let us endeavour after a firm Union among Proteſtants. Death frequently weakens

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our hands, by taking from us the Inſtruments of our Good; and ſurely 'tis unreaſonable we ſhould weaken our own hands, by dividing our Strength. Our Union will be a Wall of Defence, which nothing can demoliſh but our own Diviſions. Every Age confirms the Truth of that Maxim, *A Kingdom divided againſt it ſelf cannot ſtand.*

'Twas the Differences that were fomented betwixt *Ariſtobulus* and *Hircanus*, that brought *Pompey* to *Jeruſalem*, by whom they were made a *Roman* Province.

The Diviſions of the Old *Britons* ſubjected them firſt to the *Roman* Yoke.

The Chriſtians loſt *Paleſtine* by their unhappy Diviſions, tho it was a Place they had gain'd by a prodigious Expence of Blood and Treaſure, and had been poſſeſs'd of it about a hundred Years. I need not ſay how *England* has ſuffer'd by inteſtine Diviſions, and a Civil War.

'Twas a Maxim laid down by Cardinal *Richelieu*, That *England* could never be deſtroy'd but by her ſelf. And accordingly we find it has been the Policy of the Court of *France* to diſperſe a great number of Jeſuits thro Proteſtant States, to ſow Diſcords amongſt them. But I hope our Eyes are open, and our Reſolutions are fix'd for a firm Union: That we begin to have ſofter Thoughts of each other, and to diſuſe the Reflections that were formerly made on the account of Differences in leſſer Matters: So that the Fire of Contention, which the common Enemy of Proteſtants, has been a long time blowing up, will gradually decline till it is totally extinguiſh'd, than which nothing can more con-

tribute towards the making us the moſt powerful People, and a laſting Terror to *France*. To cloſe this Head, may all Proteſtants zealouſly practiſe what the late King ſeaſonably recommended to this preſent Parliament, in his laſt excellent Speech from the Throne, *viz.* "Let there be no other Diſtinction heard "of among us for the future; but of thoſe "who are for the Proteſtant Religion and "the preſent Eſtabliſhment; and of thoſe "who mean a Popiſh Prince and a *French* "Government."

5. Let us live in the expectation of our own Death, and labour to prepare for it. *If I wait* (ſays *Job*) *the Grave will be my Houſe. I ſaid to Corruption, Thou art my Father; and to the Worm, Thou art my Mother and Siſter.* We ſhall take but a few turns in this World, and then ſtep into another. Man in his beſt Eſtate is altogether Vanity, whether in the flouriſhing bloom of Youth, or advanc'd to a more mature Age. Therefore redeem your time, *work while it is call'd to-day, for the Night cometh when no Man can work.* No Time is properly ours but the preſent Moment, the next is out of our power. What manner of Perſons therefore ought we to be in all holy Converſation and Godlineſs? In a word, let us eſteem all things but as Droſs and Dung for the Excellency of the Knowledg of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord; and labour to be found in him, not having on our own Righteouſneſs, but the Righteouſneſs of God by Faith in Jeſus Chriſt.

6. Since Princes are frail and ſubject to Death as well as other Men, let us put our Truſt in Him who hath only Immortality.

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There is nothing in this World that is fit for us to lay the ſtreſs and weight of our Souls upon; but *Jehovah* is an adequate Object of Truſt, for in him is everlaſting Strength. Tho the Earth ſhake under our feet, and the Heavens are dark over our heads; tho the Elements ſhould melt with fervent Heat, and the Earth be toſt from its Center; yet thoſe that truſt in the Lord ſhall be as *Mount Zion*, that can never be moved. I cloſe this Head with the Words of the Pſalmiſt immediately after the Text; *Happy is he that hath the God of* Jacob *for his Help, whoſe Hope is in the Lord his God.*

Laſtly, Let us not forget to bleſs God for a Proteſtant Queen, and her peaceable Acceſſion to the Throne. This Excellent Princeſs diſcover'd a becoming Zeal for the Reform'd Religion, in oppoſition to Popery, when ſhe mov'd in a lower Orb; we have therefore juſt reaſon to expect that her Zeal will be as warm and regular now ſhe acts in a more exalted State. And let us not ceaſe to pray for our illuſtrious Queen *ANNE*, That ſhe may have Wiſdom as an Angel of God, to go in and out before ſo Great a People; that ſhe may be the *Deborah* of our *Engliſh Iſrael*, and a nurſing Mother to all the Reform'd Churches: that ſhe may have a proſperous Reign, a long Life, a ſafe Government, a ſecure Palace, prudent Parliaments, faithful Counſellors, valiant Armies, and a loyal People: That ſhe may trample upon the Necks of her Enemies, and reign in the Hearts of her Subjects; that under the Influence of her wiſe

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wiſe and mild Adminiſtration, true and undefil'd Religion may revive and flouriſh.

To which I wiſh all Her Majeſty's Subjects may as heartily ſay *Amen*, as do the Proteſtant Diſſenters of the Three Kingdoms: then ſhall I not doubt, but this will yet be *Immanuel*'s Land, and God will dwell in the midſt of us.

A

A

Funeral Sermon

Occaſion'd by the

D E A T H

Of the Reverend

Mr. *Thomas Harriſon*,

Late Miniſter of the Goſpel in *London*:

Who departed this Life *Aug.* 14. 1702.

Preach'd the 23*d* of the ſame Month.

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To the Church of Chriſt lately under the Paſtoral Care of the Deceas'd Mr. *Thomas Harriſon.*

Beloved in our Lord,

THE *Death of every ordinary Chriſtian carries ſomething in it very aweful and inſtructive, much more the Removal of an Excellent Miniſter. As the Stroke of Providence is greater, ſo the Voice of it is louder; and as it admoniſhes thoſe that ſurvive to prepare for an Inviſible World, ſo it does diſtinctly report the Diſpleaſure of Heaven: For as Princes diſcover their Reſentments in foreign Countries by calling home their Ambaſſadors; ſo does the* Prince of the Kings of the Earth *ſhow how much he is diſpleas'd with our Unprofitableneſs under the Means of Grace, when he calls them home that were Diſpenſers of the Bread of Life.*

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How ſuch a Providence is to be improv'd, I have briefly ſuggeſted in the following Sermon; which was preach'd at your joint Requeſt, and is now publiſh'd at the ſame Inſtance. I know, He, whoſe Death occaſion'd it, was dear to you: and tho the Character I have given of him be very imperfect, I have ſome Relief in this, That his Works will praiſe him better in the Gate, than I have done either from the Pulpit or the Preſs. Theſe, theſe ſhall be a more laſting Eulogy *to his Name, than if I had ſcatter'd all the Flowers of Oratory on his Hearſe.*

As for the Diſcourſe it ſelf, and the Defects it may have, the Auihor has no Apology for expoſing them and himſelf in an Age wherein ſo many think accurately, and write politely, but what is commonly us'd on ſuch occaſions.

However, ſuch as the Diſcourſe is, I give it up at your Deſire, and venture it abroad under your Patronage. Whatever be its Entertainment in the World, if it is but profitable to the Church, or ſerviceable to others, you'll have your end, and I ſhall not not miſs of mine; who am

Your Servant for Jeſus ſake,

JOHN PIGGOTT.

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2 Tim. IV. 7, 8.

I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſh'd my Courſe, I have kept the Faith.
Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord the Righteous Judg ſhall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but unto all them alſo that love his Appearing.

OUR Knowledg here is imperfect, and the Intricacies of Divine Providence do greatly amaze us: Yet this we may lay down for a certain Principle, That all the Acts of God's Sovereignty which are diſplay'd in the Government of the World, are conducted by unerring Wiſdom. For the great Apoſtle aſſures us, that *God worketh all things after the Counſel of his own Will.* Righteouſneſs is the Habitation of his Throne, tho Darkneſs does encompaſs it about. We know not indeed what God does now; but we ſhall perfectly know hereafter: Eph. 1. 11.

For

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1 Cor. 13. 10. *For when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away.* The Time is haſtning when the unſearchable Wiſdom, the impartial Juſtice, and infinite Goodneſs of God ſhall ſhine forth with a flaming Luſtre; and we ſhall ſee a Beauty and Harmony in all the dark Scenes of Providence, which were too hard for our Reaſon, and a great Exerciſe to our Faith, while we abode in this miſty Region.

We are aſſembled at this time in the Houſe of Mourning, not to arraign the Conduct of Heaven, but to humble our ſelves under God's mighty Hand, who has remov'd from the midſt of us, One under whoſe Shadow we have ſat with great delight. The Almighty has broken to pieces an Earthen Veſſel, that was excellently ſtock'd with Heavenly Treaſure: He has extinguiſh'd a burning and a ſhining Light: He has ſealed up a Star in ſudden and thick Darkneſs, which he held in his Right Hand; ſo that we are depriv'd of its comfortable Light and its uſeful Influence. And how can we but mourn our Loſs? Yet let this Conſideration prevent an immoderate Grief, that He, in whoſe Place I now ſtand, could ſay upon ſolid Grounds, when he drew near the Period of his Life, with the great Apoſtle in the Words of the Text, *I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſh'd my Courſe, I have kept the Faith. Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord the Righteous Judg ſhall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but to all them alſo that love his Appearing.*

This ſecond Epiſtle to *Timothy*, of which the Text is a part, was written by the Apoſtle *Paul*, when he was a Priſoner at *Rome*, and af-

ter

ter he had made an appearance more * than once before *Nero* the Emperor. And 'tis generally thought, both by Antient and Modern Writers, that this was the laſt Epiſtle which he wrote; and therefore *Chryſoſtom* ſays of it, *That it was as it were his laſt Will and Teſtament.* And indeed the Words immediately preceding the Text, ſignify to us that he was very apprehenſive of his approaching Death: *For* (ſays he) *I am now ready to be offer'd, and the time of* Ver. 6. *my Departure is at hand.* From the manner of the Expreſſion we may conclude, that he expected a very ſudden but violent Death, that he ſhould ſhare the Honours of Martyrdom: For the Original is very expreſſive ἤδη σπένδομαι, *I am now offer'd*, or, *I am already pour'd out*, (he alludes to the manner of Libations in Sacrifices) *and the time of my Departure* ἐφέστηκε, *is inſtant.* He ſeems every moment to be expecting his Death, and repreſents it ſo near, as if he had been not only drawing to Execution, but as if the ſacrificing Knife had been at his Throat. Whether the Menaces of the Emperor made the Apoſtle ſo apprehenſive of the nearneſs of his Death, or whether he had a new and ſpecial Revelation concerning it, as the Apoſtle *Peter* had of his, 2 *Pet.* 1.14. or whether that Apprehenſion was from both, I will not determine: But upon the whole, we find, he was not at all ſurpriz'd. He had Peace reigning within, and a Record abiding on high, and he exults like one that was more than a Conqueror: *I have fought a good Fight, I*

* *As may be collected from* 2 Tim. 4. 16, 17. *as alſo from the Poſtſcript to this Epiſtle.* Vid. L. E. du Pin. *Evangelical Hiſtory, 2d Part. and* Echard's *Church-Hiſtory.*

have finish'd my Course, I have kept the Faith. Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judg will give me at that Day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his Appearing.

In which Words we may take notice of these two general Parts.

First, The Apostle's Relation of his Conduct in this World: *I have fought a good Fight*, &c.

Secondly, The joyful Expectation he had of consummate Happiness in the other World: *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness*, &c.

I begin with the first of these, the Apostle's Relation of his Conduct in this World, about which he affirms three things:

I. That he had *fought a good Fight.*
II. That he had *finish'd his Course.* And
III. That he had *kept the Faith.*

I. The Apostle affirms that he had *fought a good Fight.* This, as well as other Phrases in the Text, are Agonistical; and 'tis more than probable, that he alludes to the celebrated Exercises that were in vogue amongst the *Grecians*, who being acquainted with these Customs, well understood the Force of the Expressions that are us'd here and elsewhere in the Apostle's Writings. *I have fought a good Fight:* The original Word is of great extent, and may be refer'd to any of the four illustrious Strifes in use amongst the *Greeks*. *I have fought a good Fight*; or, as they may be turn'd, I have striven a good Strife. Either way the Sense is the

the ſame; and they ſignify to us, that the Chriſtian Life is a Life of Warfare: But that a Goſpel-Miniſter's Life is ſo in a very eminent regard, appears, in that he is not only to ſtruggle thro the ordinary Difficulties of Life, and the Temptations that are common to Chriſtians as ſuch; but his honourable Poſt in the Church expoſes him more to the Hatred of bad Men, and the Malice of Devils, than if he ſtood on lower Ground: for being rais'd ſomewhat higher by his Office than an ordinary Chriſtian, his Enemies multiply in Number, and increaſe in Vigour; for 'tis not the Sacredneſs of the Miniſter's Calling that will ſecure him from violent Temptations and preſſing Sorrows.

Tho our Apoſtle was an *incarnate Seraphim*, as Dr. *Bates* ſomewhere calls him, on the account of his Zeal in the Service of his Divine Maſter; yet how many ſpiteful Reflections and malicious Cenſures did this excellent Man fall under, both with regard to his perſonal Conduct, and the Diſcharge of his Apoſtolick Function? And what Miniſters of the Goſpel are there that diſcover any Zeal for leſſening the Empire of Satan, and enlarging the Kingdom of the Meſſiah; but they ſoon find themſelves encompaſſed with Enemies of various ſorts? Sometimes they are attacked by ſecret Fraud, at other times with open Force; ſometimes perſecuted by profeſs'd Enemies, at other times betray'd by falſe Friends. 'Tis a tedious troubleſom War that every private Chriſtian, but remarkably every Miniſter, is engaged in. Now Fighting ſuppoſes Enemies, and theſe, as I hinted before, are many and ſtrong, who oppoſe the Work of God in the *Hearts of Beievers*, as well as the Work of God in the

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Hands of Miniſters. We are not only to encounter the Fleſh and the World, which occa-
1 Pet. 2. 11. ſion'd that Caution of the Apoſtle, *Abſtain from fleſhly Luſts that war againſt the Soul*; but we are oblig'd to contend with the fallen Angels: For, ſays the ſame Apoſtle, *We wreſtle not with Fleſh and Blood, but with Principalities and Powers, with the Rulers of the Darkneſs of this World, and with Spiritual Wickedneſs in high Places.* Every Chriſtian, but eminently every Miniſter, has an Army of Devils to contend with. Now notwithſtanding the Fatigue and Toil, the Difficulty and Hazard which attends the Chriſtian Warfare, this great Apoſtle acquitted himſelf like a good Soldier of Jeſus Chriſt; who ſpeaks in the Text as if he was trampling his Enemies under his Feet, and was juſt ready to take hold of the Crown he had been fighting for: *I have fought a good Fight.* But before I paſs to the ſecond Head, I would briefly ſuggeſt to you the Reaſons for which he calls this a *good Fight.*

1. It might be called a *good Fight*, from the *Goodneſs of the Cauſe.* 'Tis the Cauſe of God and Religion that is defended and maintained in the Chriſtian Warfare, which refers to the Rights of the Godhead, and to the Happineſs of Human Spirits: For the Apoſtate Angels would rival God in his Throne. Now in our contending with theſe Principalities, we do our utmoſt to vindicate the Rights of the Deity, and to expoſe the Pride and Tyranny of thoſe malignant Spirits: and what is the neceſſary Conſequence of this, but the Defence of Religion in general, and particularly the ſecuring the Intereſt of our immortal Souls? Which is to act agreeably to the higheſt Reaſon,

and

and ſutably to the Dignity of Human Nature, as renew'd and chang'd. In a word, the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God are wonderfully diſplay'd in twiſting our Duty and Intereſt together; ſo that the faithful Diſcharge of the former is not without the conſiderable Promotion of the latter.

2. It might be called a *Good Eight*, in regard of the *Goodneſs of his Call.* A Man may have Right on his ſide, and may favour the beſt Cauſe in the World; but things muſt be adjuſted by the Supreme Powers, and from thence muſt proceed a *Legal Call*, before ſuch a one can lawfully take up Arms againſt an approaching Enemy. 'Tis not in the power of private Perſons to act at pleaſure in ſuch Affairs, without a Call from thoſe in whoſe hands the Government is lodg'd, whether in one or more. Our Great Apoſtle in the Text acted from a very ſignal Call: for while he was fighting under the Banner of Satan, an Exceſs of Divine Light encompaſſed him round, and threw him to the Earth: But it was in order to raiſe him to Heaven; for it was follow'd with a powerful Voice that broke thro the Air like Thunder, and pierc'd to the very Center of his Soul. For being awaken'd and convinced that he was imbark'd in a bad Cauſe, and under the Wrath and Curſe of God, it pleaſed the Lord *to reveal his* Gal. 1. 16. *Son in him, that he might bear his Name before the* Acts 9. 15. Gentiles, and fight under the Banner of the King of *Zion*, both as a Chriſtian and as an Apoſtle. And tho every Perſon has not ſo remarkable and ſo extraordinary a Call as this excellent Apoſtle; yet every Chriſtian has a *good Call* to a Spiritual Warfare. We own

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this Call when we voluntarily give up our ſelves to the Father, Son and Spirit in Holy Baptiſm; which ſolemn Profeſſion, and putting on of Chriſt, can involve in it no leſs than a Reſolution in the Strength of Divine Grace to oppoſe the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil. Moreover, all the Exhortations that are ſcatter'd thro the Sacred Volume to preſs upon us the Duty of Mortification, are Motives to this Spiritual Warfare. In a word, the Sound of the Goſpel-Trumpet is not only to proclaim Liberty to Captives, but to engage all that follow the Lamb to take up Arms againſt Sin and Satan.

3. The Apoſtle might call it *a good Fight*, in regard of the *Excellency of the General*, under whoſe Banner he and all other Chriſtians fight.

The Church of Chriſt is like a well-diſciplin'd Army, and not like a tumultuous Rout; and there is a great Beauty and Luſtre upon thoſe Societies (who together make up the Univerſal Church) where the ſeveral Officers whom Chriſt has appointed, move in their own proper Spheres. Yet theſe, with ordinary Chriſtians, own the ſame common Head, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who as Generaliſſimo of this Army marches in the Van. He that is the Head of the Church, is the Captain of our Salvation, and the Royal General under whoſe Banner we fight: And who would not engage under a Perſon of ſuch good Conduct, who leads out to certain Victory? One who has infinite Wiſdom to direct, and irreſiſtible Power to defend thoſe that follow him, and to deſtroy all that oppoſe him. He is a General us'd to fight, and us'd to conquer.

4. 'Tis

4. 'Tis a *Good Fight*, becauſe of that excellent Proviſion which God hath made to furniſh all that engage in it, with ſutable Armour and other neceſſary Supplies. If a Man has never ſo great Courage, or never ſo good a Cauſe, if he's naked and unarmed when an Enemy approaches him, his Heart will almoſt die within him. But God hath taken effectual care in the Chriſtian Warfare to furniſh us with Arms proper to defend our ſelves, or to offend our Enemies. A Recital of the ſeveral parts of the Chriſtian Armour, this Apoſtle hath given in his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, where he exhorts Chriſtians, *To put on the whole Armour of God.——Having your Loins girt about with Truth, and having on the Breaſtplate of Righteouſneſs; and your Feet ſhod with the Preparation of the Goſpel of Peace: above all, taking the Shield of Faith, wherewith ye ſhall be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the Wicked: And take the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God: Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all Perſeverance and Supplication for all Saints.* In this Enumeration, as ſeveral have remark'd, there is no mention made of Armour for the Back. The Reaſon is evident; for thoſe that are good Soldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, *muſt ſet their Faces like a Flint*, and never turn their Backs in Fight. And as the Weapons of the Chriſtian Warfare are ſpiritual and not carnal, ſo they are mighty only thro God, and deſtructive only to the Enemies of God. The Chriſtian Inſtitution no where enjoins us to go on Pilgrimages bare-foot, or to ſubmit to the Penance of ſcourging our Fleſh for the Diſor-

Eph. 6. 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

Iſa. 50. 7.

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ders of our Spirits. These are the base Contrivances of the Popish Party, who would have Thongs and Whipcord as necessary Weapons in the Christian Warfare, as the Sword of the Spirit, and the Shield of Faith.

Moreover, shouldst thou begin to faint thro thy constant Toils in War, God has promis'd
Isa. 40. 29. *to give Power to the Faint, and to them that have no Might he encreaseth Strength; and that as our Day is, our Strength shall be.*

5. The Apostle might call it a *good Fight*, in regard of the *Excellent Company* in which Christians engage under the Banner of Jesus. For in the Christian Warfare we fight in company with all the good Angels that are in Heaven, and all the good Men that are upon Earth. The Author to the *Hebrews* assures
Heb. 1. 14. us, That all the good Angels are *ministring Spirits sent forth to minister to them that shall be Heirs of Salvation.* Now 'tis generally thought, that among other good Offices these kind Spirits do us, * *they do oppose the evil Angels, and defend us against their Assaults, countermining their malicious Designs and Attempts upon us.* Then as to good Men, tho they have their single Conflicts, yet other Christians assist 'em therein by their Advice and Prayers; so that in our spiritual Warfare we may consider our selves as fighting in company with Elect Angels and Redeemed Men, who compose but one Army under the Conduct of the Prince of the Kings of the Earth.

How ambitious lately were some Persons of a Martial Genius of fighting under the Banner

* Vid. Tillotson's 2d *Posthumous Vol.* p. 166.

of

of an Illuſtrious Hero, I mean *William* the Third of Glorious Memory? But how much more deſirous ſhould Chriſtians be to fight under the Banner of the Son of God, in company with all the Angels in Heaven and good Men upon Earth?

6. The Reward that awaits thoſe that are Victors, proves that 'tis a *Good Fight*. In other Fights many Soldiers fall, and never ſee on which ſide the Victory turns; but in this Warfare, tho thou dieſt in the Heat of Battel, yet thou art victorious. But what that Reward is that ſhall be beſtow'd on ſuch as *fight the good Fight of Faith* (for ſo the Apoſtle elſewhere calls this Fight) you will hear when I ſpeak to the latter part of the Text, to which I ſhall haſten.

II. The Apoſtle affirms, when he was in the view of Death, that *he had finiſh'd his Courſe*. Here he compares his Work, both as a Saint and as an Apoſtle, to the running of a Race; which comprehends all that a Chriſtian is concern'd about, both with regard to Faith and Practice, while he abides in this World. It imports the Exerciſe of all Chriſtian Graces, the Performance of all perſonal and relative Duties, together with a conſtant Subjection to the Authority of the Son of God in the practice of every Goſpel-Ordinance; which things are the great Ornaments of the Chriſtian Life: for as the Stars beautify the Firmament, ſo do theſe things give a Luſtre and Beauty to the Converſation of Chriſtians. But farther, it imports a vigorous Oppoſition to whatever meets us in the way of Duty, and a ſurmounting all Difficulties *in the Strength of the Lord, and in the Power of his Might.*

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A common Race cannot be run without great Strength, extraordinary Activity, and unwearied Perſeverance. The firſt is oppos'd to Weakneſs, the ſecond to Sloth, and the third to Apoſtacy: So that by this Alluſion in the Text the Apoſtle ſets forth the great Difficulties and the arduous Labours he met with, and paſs'd thro in the diſcharge of his Duty. And when he cries out, *I have finiſh'd my Courſe*, 'tis as if he had ſaid, "Tho I have met with "great Oppoſition in my Race as a Chriſtian "and as an Apoſtle, yet I have forc'd my way "through by the Aids of omnipotent Grace; "and as I am juſt cloſing my Days, ſo have I "finiſh'd the Work which God gave me to "do: And as I have ſuffer'd for the Teſtimo-"ny of Jeſus already, *that Teſtimony* I hope "to ſeal with my Blood; for I expect no cheap "and eaſy Victory. Yet the aſſurance I have "of Divine Strength, when I ſhall ſuffer the "pains of Martyrdom, makes me ſpeak as if "I had laid down my Life already, and was "juſt receiving my Reward."

So that, upon the whole, the Apoſtle did in Heb. 12. 1. Patience poſſeſs his Soul, as he had *with Patience run the Race that was ſet before him.* He bore the Evils God ſaw meet to bring upon him, and quietly waited for that Good which God had promis'd to give to him. In a word, he was ſo conſcientious in the whole of his Conduct, that he was ready to appeal to Heaven for the Sincerity of his Heart, and to all thoſe he had labour'd amongſt for the Unblamableneſs of his Life. He ſo diſcharg'd all his Obligations both in a publick and private Capacity, in his excellent Deportment as a Chriſtian, and in his abundant Labours as an Apoſtle,

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Apoſtle, that he could ſay with reſpect to both, when on the Confines of the Dead, *I have finiſh'd my Courſe.*

III. He affirms, *That he had kept the Faith.* Faith here may be either taken for the Grace of Faith, or the Doctrine of Faith. If we underſtand it in the former ſenſe, then the Apoſtle would ſignify to us, That he had liv'd a Life of Faith, in the conſtant Exerciſe of that excellent Grace. *We walk by Faith, not by Sight*, ſays this Apoſtle; and elſewhere, *The Life that I live in the Fleſh is by the Faith of the Son of God.* And if we underſtand the Words thus, I do not ſee but that they may comprehend that Faithfulneſs alſo which * ſome would have to be meant by his keeping the Faith, *viz.* That Faith he had plighted to God, when dedicated firſt by the Vow of Baptiſm, and afterwards *ſeparated to the Work of the Miniſtry by the Impoſition of Hands.* He had faithfully diſcharg'd thoſe Promiſes and Vows which he made on both occaſions.

But by Faith in this place I chuſe rather to underſtand the *Doctrine of Faith.* And then the Apoſtle's affirming, *that he had kept the Faith*, may imply theſe things.

1. That he had kept the Doctrine of Faith uncorrupt in his Preaching: That as he received it without Mixture, ſo he preached it to others in its own native Purity and Luſtre. That which this Apoſtle ſaid concerning the Holy Supper of our Lord, he could ſay of

* Vid. *Biſhop of Sarum's Sermon at the Funeral of the Abp of Canterbury*, p. 5.

every

1 Cor. 11. 23. every part of the Doctrine of Faith; *For I have received of the Lord that which alſo I deliver'd unto you.* He never taught for Doctrine the Commandments of Men: Nor did he thro Cowardice conceal, or for Intereſt corrupt any Branch of the Doctrine of Faith that was committed to him. Therefore in his valedictory Acts 20. 26, 27. Diſcourſe to the *Epheſian* Chriſtians, *he takes 'em to record that he was pure from the Blood of all Men. For* (ſays he) *I have not ſhunned to declare unto you all the Counſel of God.*

And tho ſome thro Ignorance, and others thro Malice, might miſinterpret what he ſpoke to an end quite different from what he deſign'd, yet he teſtifies for himſelf and his Brethren, 2 Cor. 4. 2. *That they had not handled the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifeſtation of the Truth, commending themſelves to every Man's Conſcience in the ſight of God.* In all the Sermons of our Apoſtle the unſophiſticated Doctrine of Faith was delivered with the greateſt Clearneſs and Strength. But,

2. By the Apoſtle's keeping the Doctrine of Faith, may be intended his Defence of it againſt the bold Encroachments of falſe Teachers, who did their utmoſt to corrupt the Chriſtian Faith. I have not time to take notice of the * *Dogmata* that were broach'd by *Simon*, and afterwards propagated by the *Gnoſticks*, with a deſign to debauch and ſubvert the Chriſtian Religion. I can only ſay in general, that it was the unwearied Endeavour of this excellent Apoſtle in his Epiſtles to the Churches, as well

* Vid. *The Opinions of* Simon *and the* Gnoſticks, *recited by* Echard *in his* General Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, *p.* 231.

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as in publick Diſputes, to detect the Errors both of *Jews* and *Pagans*, and to defend the Doctrine that he deliver'd from the Exceptions that were made againſt it by all ſorts of Enemies; that neither the antiquated Ceremonies of the *Jews*, nor the ſuperſtitious Rites of the *Gentiles* might be mix'd with the pure Doctrine of Faith, which was deliver'd to the Saints. Indeed in things of an indifferent nature, he became all things to all Men, that by any means he might gain ſome. But when the great Articles of the Chriſtian Faith were ſtruck at, he was ſo far from complying with the Humour and Deſign of the falſe Apoſtles, that he would not *give place by ſubjection, no* Gal. 2. 5. *not for an hour.*

3. The Apoſtle's keeping the Doctrine of Faith, may refer to that ſpecial Care that he took to hand it down uncorrupted to Poſterity. Thus much may be collected from the Charge this Apoſtle gives to *Timothy* in the ſecond Chapter of this ſecond Epiſtle, ver. 1. *Thou therefore, my Son, be ſtrong in the Grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus; and the things that thou haſt heard of me among many Witneſſes, the ſame commit thou to faithful Men, who ſhall be able to teach others alſo.* So that when the Apoſtle ſays he has kept the Faith, 'tis as if he had ſaid, I have not only preached it in its Purity, and defended it againſt the Attempts of others to adulterate it; but I have taken care that it ſhall be tranſmitted uncorrupt to Poſterity after my Deceaſe.

4. By keeping the Faith, may be intended that farther Teſtimony the Apoſtle was juſt ready to give to the Doctrine which he had preach'd, by ſealing it with his Blood. For

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he had before ſignified how well he was reconcil'd to the Death of a Martyr for the *Chriſtian Cauſe*. For tho many Brethren beſought him with a Flood of Tears not to go up to *Jeruſalem*, becauſe of the Prophecy of *Agabus*; Paul *anſwered and ſaid, What mean ye to weep and break my Heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but alſo to die at* Jeruſalem *for the Name of the Lord Jeſus*. And 'twas the flaming Zeal of this Apoſtle to promote and ſpread the pure Doctrine of Faith when he was at *Rome*, that provok'd the Emperor to haſten his Death: For by his preaching there, 'tis reported that God made him an Inſtrument to convert one of the Emperor's *Concubines*, and his *Cupbearer*, to the Chriſtian Faith. So that this Lion reſolv'd to wreek his Malice upon the Holy Apoſtle, who being a *Roman*, was beheaded immediately after by *Nero*'s Command. And as this Great Doctor of the *Gentiles* fought in Faith, and run in Faith, ſo at length he died not only in the Faith, but for it; ſealing the Truth of that Faith which he preach'd with his own Blood; being born up under all his Trials by the eye he had to the Recompence of Reward. And this leads me to the Second part of the Text,

Acts 21. 10, 11, 12, 13.

The joyful Expectation which the Apoſtle had of conſummate Happineſs in the other World. *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord the Righteous Judg ſhall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them alſo that love his Appearing.* Wherein are theſe Six things conſiderable to be inſiſted on.

I. What

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I. What the Apoſtle expected, and that was *a Crown of Righteouſneſs.*
II. From whom he expected it, and that was *from the Lord the Righteous Judg.*
III. Under what Conſideration he expected this Crown, and that was as a free Gift: *The Lord the Righteous Judg ſhall give me.*
IV. The Time when he expected to receive it; that was, *at that Day, i. e.* the Great Day of Judgment.
V. The Certainty and Ground of his Expectation: *Henceforth is laid up for me.*
VI. The Intereſt that other Saints have in a Crown of Righteouſneſs: It ſhall be given (ſays he) *not only to me, but to all them alſo that love his Appearing.*

I. What the Apoſtle expected, and that was *a Crown of Righteouſneſs.*

By which Expreſſion he can intend no leſs than the compleat Happineſs of the future State. We may obſerve, that in the Holy Scriptures there are ſeveral choſen Compariſons made uſe of by the Holy Ghoſt to ſet forth the Excellency and Glory of the Life to come. Sometimes 'tis repreſented by the Streams of a pure River; by the Joys of a Marriage-Feſtival; by a magnificent Structure that has in it many Manſions; by an Inheritance in Light; by a uniform City; by a glorious Kingdom, and in my Text by a glittering Crown.

In the former part of the Text I told you, that the Apoſtle alludes to the *Olympick* Exerciſes in uſe among the *Greeks:* In this latter part, when he comes to ſpeak of the Reward of the Faithful, he ſeems alſo to allude to that Reward

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Reward that was beſtow'd on ſuch as ſucceeded in the afore-mentioned Exerciſes, which was a Crown compos'd of the Branches of ſome Tree, which is therefore called by *Lucian* φύλλινος στέφανος, a leafy Crown. But the Crown mention'd in my Text is more excellent and more durable; for elſewhere it is called, *an incorruptible Crown, a Crown of Life, a Crown of Glory*; but in the Text *a Crown of Righteouſneſs*. So that it will be neceſſary briefly to anſwer theſe two Queſtions:

1. Why the Happineſs of the Saints in the other World is repreſented by *a Crown?*
2. Why 'tis called a *Crown of Righteouſneſs?*

1. Why the Happineſs of the Saints in the other World is ſet forth by *a Crown?*

1ſt. This is to ſignify the Recovery of that Dominion which we loſt by our Apoſtacy from God. We were at firſt created with a Dominion over the Creatures; but they in a great meaſure ſhook off their Subjection to Man upon his Diſobedience to God. Now our Saviour recovers us from our abject State by his Obedience and Sufferings, thereby purchaſing for us a *Crown*, *i. e.* a future State of Happineſs, wherein we ſhall have as much Dignity and Dominion as becomes Creatures of our Order. A Crown is an Emblem of Majeſty, and notes the Imperial Honour and Kingly Dignity to which the Saints ſhall be rais'd in the other World. The Apoſtle lets us know that the Children of God on Earth *are joint Heirs with Chriſt*; but the Expreſſion in the Text ſignifies, that in Heaven they ſhall be *joint Regents* with him: And ſo he has elſewhere promis'd,

That

That if we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo reign with him. And ſays he, *I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.* And, *To him that overcometh will I grant to ſit with me in my Throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſat down with my Father in his Throne.* Upon which, one obſerves, That after victorious Obedience, the Saints ſhall be taken into Sovereign Alliance with Chriſt, and reign for ever. Luke 22.29. Rev. 3.21.

2*dly*, The Saints Happineſs in the other World may be ſet forth by a Crown, becauſe it ſignifies Riches and Plenty as well as Honour and Dignity. And accordingly we are told, That in the Divine Preſence *there is Fulneſs of Joy, and at God's Right Hand there are Pleaſures for evermore.* Theſe are pure unallay'd Delights: but here our moſt exalted and ſublimated Pleaſures are mix'd with Ignorance; for I ſpeak of intellectual Pleaſures. As for thoſe that are more groſs, that ſtrike our Senſes, they are not to be nam'd with the Delights of Heaven, for they vaniſh in the Compariſon. So that upon the whole we may conclude, that that Fulneſs and Variety that is to be enjoy'd in Heaven, ſhall always pleaſe and ſatisfy the enlarged Capacities of Human Spirits. And that this Satisfaction ſhall never decay, but abide for ever, is plainly expreſs'd, in that it is elſewhere call'd a Crown that fades not away. In a word, the Aſſurance that our Crown ſhall be incorruptible and eternal, is of ſo much weight, that without it our Crowns would ſit uneaſy on our Heads: for the thoughts of enjoying an uncertain Felicity would make us pauſe in the midſt of our *Hallelujahs*, and damp all our Joys. But, Pſal. 16. 11.

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2. Why is the Crown in the Text call'd *a Crown of Righteouſneſs?* I anſwer,

1*ſt*, Becauſe 'tis purchaſed by the Righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. The Blood by which we are redeem'd from Hell, is the Price of the Crown we expect in Heaven. There was Value enough in the *one Offering* of the Son of God, to merit for us a Crown of Life. Death is ſpoken of in Scripture as the proper Wages of Sin; but Eternal Life is mention'd as a gratuitous Gift thro Jeſus Chriſt our Lord: 'Tis freely beſtow'd with reſpect to us, but due to the exuberant Merits of the Son of God.

2*dly*, It may be call'd a Crown of Righteouſneſs, as 'tis the Reward of Righteous Perſons. *Verily*, ſays the Pſalmiſt, *there is a Reward for the Righteous.* Tho * a Righteous Man is made ſo by the Imputation of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt to him, and the Infuſion or Implantation of the Graces of his Spirit in him; yet God delights to crown his own Gifts: He makes us Righteous, and then rewards us as Righteous Perſons. *He that ſoweth to the Spirit, ſhall of the Spirit reap Life everlaſting.* And we are aſſur'd, that Chriſt *will render Eternal Life to them, who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for Glory, Honour and Immortality.*

Gal. 6. 8.

Rom. 2. 6, 7.

3*dly*, This Crown in the Text is called a Crown of Righteouſneſs, becauſe 'tis beſtow'd according to the faithful Promiſe of the Righteous God. The compleat Happineſs we expect to enjoy in the other Life, God has put

* *See a Funeral Sermon on Mrs.* Elizabeth Ewer, *by Mr.* Thos Harriſon, p. 7, 8, 9, 10.

into

into Promiſe in this. As the Choſen of God are called according to his Purpoſe, ſo they are eternally ſav'd according to his Promiſe: *Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.* Rev. 2. 10. Indeed God was at liberty whether he would enter into ſuch an Engagement or not; but having plighted his Faithfulneſs, * he is a Debtor to his Promiſe, and we are ſure he'll be true to his Word. *Hath he ſaid, and ſhall not he do it? Hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good?* Our God is a faithful God, a God of Truth; which will be abundantly diſplay'd at the *Great Day*, when according to his righteous Promiſes he ſhall crown all the faithful Followers of the Lamb.

II. We are now to conſider from whom the Apoſtle expected this Crown of Righteouſneſs; and that was from *the Lord the Righteous Judg.*

That our Bleſſed Saviour is here meant, is very evident; for the Scriptures abundantly teſtify, That he is the Perſon ordain'd by the Father to adminiſter the Judgment of the Great Day. Chriſt as God has an original Right to diſpenſe Rewards and Puniſhments; but as Mediator, 'tis a delegated Right. *The Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son: i. e.* The Father judgeth no man immediately; but Jeſus Chriſt, as ſuſtaining the Character, and diſcharging the Province of Mediator, ſhall be Judg of Quick and Dead; and 'twill be one of the laſt Acts of his Mediatorſhip to diſpenſe Rewards and Puniſhments, and theſe he ſhall diſpenſe as a Joh. 5. 22.

* Promittendo ſe Debitorem fecit. *Aug.*

Righteous Judg. 'Twas propheſied of him,
Iſ. 11. 3, 4. *That he ſhould not judg after the ſight of his Eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his Ears: But with Righteouſneſs ſhall he judg the Poor, and reprove with Equity.* As God, our Saviour is eſſentially Holy and Righteous; and as Man, *he was Holy, Harmleſs, Undefiled, and ſeparate from Sinners.* So that we have the greateſt aſſurance that we can have, that our Lord's Proceedings in Judgment will be according to the ſtricteſt Juſtice. The Rule in the final Judgment will be moſt equitable, the Evidence certain and full, and the Sentence impartial. So that our Lord *will be clear when he judgeth:* for every diſobedient Rebel ſhall be ſtruck with a defenceleſs Silence, when doom'd to an eternal Priſon of Fire; and every Child of God, when crown'd, ſhall applaud the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt as a Judg, in beſtowing that Reward which he purchas'd as a Saviour.

III. Under what conſideration did the Apoſtle expect this *Crown of Righteouſneſs*; and that was as a *free Gift, which the Lord the Righteous Judg ſhall give me.*

Tho this Crown is a fruit of Chriſt's Purchaſe, yet 'tis alſo an effect of Divine Bounty, for 'tis freely given with reſpect to us. Chriſt indeed will manage the Judicial Proceſs
Rom. 2. 7. according to Mens Works. Yet I find that the future Reward of the Saints is expreſſed in Scripture by *Mercy.* The Apoſtle ſpeaking
2 Tim. 1. 18. of *Oneſiphorus*, ſays, *The Lord grant to him that he may find Mercy of the Lord in that Day.* And we are exhorted *to keep our ſelves in the Love of God, looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto Eternal Life.* Now if our Reward

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ward in Heaven is of God's Mercy, it totally excludes the Creature's Merit. 'Tis impoſſible that Men ſhould merit either before or after they have received Grace; for what proportion is there betwixt the Services of the beſt Men upon Earth, and a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory in Heaven? In the Apoſtle's Judgment, the Sufferings of this preſent time are not worthy to be compar'd with the Glory that ſhall be revealed in us. Accordingly we are told, that the *Robes of the Martyrs are waſh'd white in the Blood of the Lamb*, not in their own Blood. *Not by Works of Righteouſneſs that we have done, but according to his Mercy he ſaved us.* A Crown of Righteouſneſs is not *merited* by us, but *given* to us, for the ſake of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Tit. 3. 5.

IV. The Time when the Apoſtle expected to receive this *Crown of Righteouſneſs*; and that was at the Great Day of Judgment.

Which the Lord the Righteous Judg ſhall give me at That Day; at That Day he had been ſpeaking of in the Context, the Day of Chriſt's Appearing and Kingdom, when he ſhall come to judg both the Quick and the Dead; at That Day, at that Great and Solemn Day. The Apoſtle here ſpeaks of the Happineſs of the whole Man, and not of that Reward that is beſtow'd on naked Spirits, in the Interval betwixt the Death of the Body, and its Revival at the End of the World. So that it is very evident, by that Day the Apoſtle intends that Aweful Day, when Chriſt ſhall come *in flaming Fire, to take Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*—At that Day, *when he ſhall come* 2 Tim. 4. 1. 2 Theſſ. 1. 8, 10.

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to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admir'd in all them that believe. At that Day, when he ſhall appear in his own Glory; *i. e.* in all the Glory of an Incarnate God. At that Day, when he ſhall appear in the Glory of his Father alſo; *i. e.* as ſome underſtand it, with the Authority of an Univerſal Judg. At that Day, when he ſhall appear in the Glory of his Holy Angels; *i. e.* with a ſhining Retinue of ſinleſs Spirits, and with all the Enſigns of Pomp and Terror. At that Day, when the Sound of the Trump, and the Voice of the Arch-Angel ſhall awaken the Dead, and the Duſt of the Saints ſhall be reviv'd Incorruptible and Immortal.

V. We are to conſider the Ground and Certainty of the Apoſtle's Expectation: *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs.*

It remains for me, Λοιπον, for ſo the word ſignifies; *q. d.* I know, and am well aſſur'd, that there is a Reward prepar'd and ſecur'd for me: It was prepar'd from the Foundation of the World by the Father's Love: It was afterwards actually purchas'd by the Son's Blood; and 'tis not only ſecur'd to me by the excellent Promiſes of the Goſpel, but by the Aſcenſion of my Lord into Heaven, as a publick Perſon, as the Head and Repreſentative of the whole Church. Chriſt is enter'd as our Forerunner, to take poſſeſſion of what he himſelf had purchas'd for us. Chriſt is aſcended into the Heaven of Heavens, and will draw all his People after him. Therefore a little before his Death, he addreſſes his Father in theſe words: *Father, I will that thoſe whom thou haſt given me be with me where I am, that they may ſee my Glory.*

VI. The

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VI. The Apoſtle takes notice of the Intereſt that other Saints have in a *Crown of Righteouſneſs: It ſhall be given* (ſays he) *not to me only, but to all them alſo that love his Appearing.*

Tho the Miniſters of the Goſpel, that turn many to Righteouſneſs, ſhall ſhine like the Stars for ever and ever; tho they ſhall receive very bright and pondrous Crowns, yet they ſhall not monopolize all the Happineſs of the future State among themſelves. There will be Crowns for your Heads, and Palms for your Hands, that faithfully follow the Lamb, and ſucceſsfully fight under his Banner. *In my Father's Houſe* (ſays our Bleſſed Saviour) *are many Manſions; if it were not ſo, I would have told you.* There is room enough in Heaven to receive all the ſincere Retainers to the Son of God. The Divine Preſence is an unwaſted Spring of Delight to the whole General Aſſembly above. The Sun in the Firmament warms and enlightens all; its Beams have refreſhed this Earth for ſeveral thouſand Years, yet that Globe of Fire is not leſſen'd in its Luſtre, nor weaken'd in its Influence. So that God, who is a Good as indiviſible as infinite, ſhall render all happy that love his Son's Appearing. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of Chriſt's *ſecond Appearance*, which ſhall be in Power and great Glory, *without Sin to Salvation.* Now the Love of Chriſt's Appearance involves in it our Meditation of it, our Waiting for it, our Haſtening to it; and ſuch a Preparedneſs to meet our Heavenly Bridegroom, that we may conſtantly cry out, Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly. Now all ſuch ſhall re-

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ceive *a Crown of Righteouſneſs.* Not that we are to imagine, that every private Chriſtian will have a Reward equal to the Apoſtle *Paul*, and others that have done and ſuffer'd extraordinary things for the Name of Chriſt. For to me it ſeems more than probable, that there are different Degrees of Glory, to which the Saints ſhall be advanc'd in the other World: For tho every Saint ſhall be content with his Reward; yet thoſe that have excell'd in Fidelity and Zeal in God's Service, ſhall be rewarded with a more excellent Glory. We find in various Paſſages of Scripture, that Men of extraordinary Characters have ſpecial Rewards aſſign'd them: We are told of a Prophet's Reward, and of a Righteous Man's Reward. Now far be it from me to think that Infinite Wiſdom diſtinguiſheth without a Difference; neither can I conceive why Chriſt ſhould mention the Reward of a Prophet as a ſpecial Reward, if the ſame is beſtow'd in common upon all the Faithful.

Mat. 10. 41.

Again, we are told in Scripture, *That in the Reſurrection we ſhall be as the Angels of God*, amongſt whom there are different Orders; for they are diſtinguiſh'd by the Apoſtle into Thrones and Dominions, Principalities and Powers, Angels and Arch-Angels, Cherubims and Seraphims. And 'tis remarkable, that the Angel *Gabriel* ſays of himſelf, *I am* Gabriel *that ſtand in the Preſence of God:* Upon which one obſerves, that he diſtinguiſhed himſelf as much by his Station as by his Name.

But I haſten, and ſhall mention but one Scripture more on this occaſion. *He who ſoweth ſparingly ſhall reap alſo ſparingly, and he who ſoweth bountifully ſhall reap alſo bountifully.*

2 Cor. 9. 6.

Upon

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Upon the whole I conclude, that as one Man differs from another in Wiſdom and Stature; and that as one Angel differs from another in Dignity and Honour above; and as one Star in the Firmament differs from another in Glory; ſo will one Saint differ from another in the Kingdom of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

It remains that I make a few Inferences from each part of my Text, and conclude.

Firſt, From the Relation the Apoſtle gives of his Conduct in this World, *I have fought*, &c. I infer the following things.

1. That it is not ſo eaſy to get to Heaven, as ſome People dream. We muſt watch and pray, ſtrive and run, wreſtle and fight; we muſt encounter great Oppoſitions, and ſtruggle thro mighty Difficulties, if ever we aſcend into the *Mount of God*. Our Saviour aſſures us, *That ſtrait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way that leads to Life, and few there be that find it.* What with the Corruption of our Natures, the Frowns and Flatteries of the World, and the Malignity of the fallen Angels, *the Righteous themſelves are ſcarcely ſaved; where then ſhall the Ungodly and Sinner appear?*

2. Let neither Miniſters nor private Chriſtians be diſcouraged, becauſe of their reſpective Difficulties in the Chriſtian Warfare; for 'tis a Confederate War we are engaged in. God is on our ſide while we plead his Cauſe: *Fear not, O my Soul*, may every Saint ſay, *for they that are with us are more than they that are againſt us*: Or in the Words of the Apoſtle *John*, *Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the World.* And in a ſpecial manner let Miniſters acquit themſelves like good Soldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, *contending earneſtly for the Faith* 1 Joh. 4. 4.

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Faith once delivered to the Saints; for they are ſet for the *Defence of the Goſpel*, and therefore are bound to plead for the great Truths of it, againſt the Cavils of Scepticks and Infidels.

But *Secondly*, with regard to the Expectation which the Apoſtle had of conſummate Happineſs in the other World, we may infer:

(1.) How brightly has God diſplay'd his Wiſdom and Goodneſs, in propoſing Rewards to animate us in our Work and Warfare. Some Men, who are wiſe above what's written, affirm, that to encourage our ſelves with the Proſpect and Hopes of a Reward, is Mercenary. I allow that the Glory of God ought to be our ultimate governing End, in all the Actions of the Chriſtian Life. Yet 'tis evident that the Holy Ghoſt propoſes the Reward of Glory as a quickening Motive to Goſpel-Obedience: And ſurely, if Jeſus Chriſt as Man, made uſe of ſuch rational Motives, it would be proud Enthuſiaſm for us to refuſe 'em. The Author to the *Hebrews* tells us,

Heb. 12. 2. that Jeſus *for the Joy that was ſet before him, endured the Croſs*, &c. And if we would endure Hardſhip as good Soldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, and not be weary and faint in our Minds, we muſt keep *the Crown* in our View, as he did *the Joy that was ſet before him.*

(2.) How much does it concern us all to make ſure of a Crown of Righteouſneſs, and to clear up our Title to it? The former will lay the Foundation of our Happineſs, and the latter of our Comfort; which cannot be, unleſs we are juſtified by the *Obedience of Chriſt*, and renewed by the *Spirit of Chriſt*. *Verily, verily*, ſays our Saviour, *except a Man be*

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be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God. Our Natural Alliance to God, which is a Relation that all Creatures ſtand in to their Creator, will not give us a Title to the Heavenly Inheritance: we muſt be Children of God by Regeneration, and adopted into the Family of Heaven, before the Scripture pronounces us *Coheirs with Jeſus Chriſt*; which to be perſuaded of, on ſolid grounds, will make the pale Face of a dying Saint ſhine with the Luſtre of an Angel, and fill his Soul with a Joy that is unſpeakable and full of Glory.

(3.) How ſhould thoſe contemn *this World*, that live in the conſtant Expectation of conſummate Happineſs *in Heaven?* The Faſhion of this World paſſeth away; why ſhould we chaſe the flying Shadow? All the Pleaſures and Delights of Senſe are vaniſhing and deceitful alſo, like an imaginary Entertainment in a Dream, which feeds the Fancy; but as ſoon as we awake, we find nothing but Emptineſs and Diſappointment. O that we could always view this vain World in a true and undeceiving Light, as thoſe generally do that are ſick and dying! then we ſhould ſoon be able to ſay with the Apoſtle, *We are crucified to the World, and the World to us.*

(4.) How reaſonable is it that ſuch as are in expectation of conſummate Happineſs in Heaven hereafter, ſhould have their Converſation there now? We profeſs to have Treaſure in Heaven, there ſurely our Hearts ſhould be. Why ſhould our Souls be charmed and captivated with the little Gaieties of Life, when the great Concerns of Eternity are on our Hands, and Crowns of Glory are in our View?

(5.) Let

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(5.) Let the Reward we expect in Heaven make us patient and content under all the Afflictions we meet with on Earth. *Brethren*, says the Apostle, *the time is short:* tho our Trials are sharp, they shall not be long; Weeping may endure for a Night, but Joy shall come in the Morning. *These light Afflictions that are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.*

(6.) Let the Consideration of that Reward that the Saints hope to receive after Death, reconcile 'em to the Thoughts of Dying. Why should we be unwilling to leave a vain World, and that our Souls should dislodg from our vile and troublesom Bodies, when they are to pass into the blissful Presence of the King of Glory? If our Tempers were truly Christian, *we should groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our House which is from above; and be willing rather to be absent from the Body, that we might be present with the Lord.*

(7.) Let the Consideration of there being a Crown of Righteousness laid up for all that love Christ's Appearing, comfort us under the Loss of our Pious Relations. Indeed the more excellent our Friends are, the greater Loss we sustain by their Removal; and that which should alleviate our Sorrow, gives us a deeper Wound: for the fitter our Friends are for Heaven, the more desirable is their Society upon Earth. But yet, after all, 'tis some Relief to consider that those that were dear to us, have only made an advantageous Change; they have parted with this Earth for Heaven, with our Society below for better Company above; their Faith is turn'd into Vision, and their

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their Hope into Enjoyment; they were lately languiſhing on a Bed of Sickneſs, but now are ſhining on an Illuſtrious Throne. Such Thoughts as theſe I may reaſonably ſuggeſt to the ſurviving Relations of that Excellent Miniſter of the Goſpel, Mr. *Thomas Harriſon*, whoſe Deceaſe has occaſion'd this Diſcourſe; for he could ſay in the View of Death, *I have fought a good Fight*, &c. And is He dead? O heavy Tidings! To mention it, chills my very Blood and Spirits. And is He dead? And ſhall you ſee his Face, and hear his Voice no more from this Pulpit? Well, but his Name lives, and will diffuſe grateful Odours to a late Poſterity: for tho he is dead, he yet ſpeaketh; and in Juſtice and Gratitude to his Memory, I have ſeveral things to ſay, that are *lovely and of good Report*.

And tho I had ſuch an Affection for the Perſon deceaſed, that I can ſay it with all the Seriouſneſs that becomes my Character, that if it had been the Will of God, and I had been as ripe for Heaven as he was, I ſhould rather have choſen to have filled his *Tomb*, than to have ſtood on this ſad Occaſion in his *Pulpit*: Yet I hope the Strength of my *Paſſion* will not biaſs my *Judgment*; and that I ſhall ſpeak nothing but *the Words of Truth and Soberneſs*. There is no danger of flattering the Dead, and I am under no Temptation to do it to the Living. I proceed therefore to ſay ſomething concerning our Deceaſed Friend, whoſe very early Years were devoted to Heaven, and his Soul betimes imbued with the Grace of God. He took upon him the ſolemn Profeſſion of Religion, and became a Member of an Honourable Church of Chriſt, about the Age that our Saviour

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Saviour was, when he disputed with the *Jewish Doctors:* And like the Master he serv'd, *He grew in Wisdom and Stature, and in Favour with God and Man.*

In his blooming Youth he discover'd an extraordinary Relish of Divine things, and his Thirst after solid Knowledg was such, that he could not stoop to the Trifles of Trade (for which he was designed) but his Capacious Soul aspir'd after something higher. And so soon as he obtain'd full Liberty for Study, he made a considerable Proficiency in *Useful Learning*, being train'd up under a Learned * Tutor now alive; as he before had had the Advice, Conversation, and Advantage of sitting under the Ministry of † two Excellent and Judicious Divines, joint Pastors of that Church to which he stood related for above twenty Years.

When he had a due Call to preach in Publick (for he did not run before he was sent) he soon discover'd his excellent Qualifications for the Ministerial Work: For as he had entertained very clear and sound Notions concerning the Fundamental Articles of our Holy Religion; so the several Graces that adorn the Christian Life did shine with an admirable Lustre through his whole Conduct. His Life in every Instance was agreeable to his Profession. He was not a trifling, airy Professor, but a solid substantial Christian; one that was able to speak to Cases of Conscience from his own Experience, as well as from the Books of Casuists.

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* Mr. *Thomas Rowe.*
† Dr. *Nehem. Cox,* and Mr. *William Collins.*

He

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He had laid in ſo good a Fund of Uſeful Knowledg, and ſo read and ſtudied Divinity, that upon the propoſing of a Queſtion he would immediately ſpeak to it with great Penetration and Accuracy, yet not without a becoming Deference to thoſe that exceeded him in Years; tho he would abide by the Notions he had eſpous'd, till the Evidence of Reaſon oblig'd him to quit them.

He was a Perſon of great Integrity of Soul, a *Nathanael* indeed, one that could be facetious in Converſation without being frothy and vain, and ſerious without being moroſe and ſullen.

He kept himſelf (through the Grace of God) unſpotted from the World: *He kept Innocence, and took heed to the thing that was right.* And ſo great a Concern had he for the Honour of his Holy Profeſſion, that he would deny himſelf in things innocent in their own Nature, rather than ſcandalize the Weak, or lay a Stumbling-block before the openly Profane. He was a careful Obſerver of the Apoſtolick Injunction, *To abſtain from all Appearance of Evil.* And one thing I have often remark'd concerning him (which I believe all that knew him will confeſs) he was a very Religious Obſerver of his Word, his Promiſes were as ſure and Sacred as an Oath.

He was in every Relation Deſirable and Praiſe-worthy, *a Dutiful Son, a Tender Affectionate Husband, a Kind Father, a Prudent Maſter, a True and Laſting Friend, and a Faithful Laborious Miniſter.* But 'tis the laſt of theſe I am more eminently concern'd to ſpeak of at this time; and indeed I can ſpeak with the more Freedom, becauſe he was one who lived ſo that his Sermons might be read in his Converſation: for

for he was an *Example to Believers, in Word, in Converſation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, and in Purity.* He exemplified the Power of his Principles in Religion, by his cloſe Walk with God; and tho his Arguments for Chriſtianity were always demonſtrative, and his Perſuaſions ſtrong, yet there was a greater force in the ſhining Vertues of his Life: for by theſe, Men were convinc'd that himſelf believ'd what he preach'd.

Preaching the Goſpel was the very Pleaſure of his Soul: *And the Zeal of God's Houſe had eaten him up.* He was ſo entirely devoted to the Work of the Miniſtry, and his Heart ſo engag'd in it, that from the time of his firſt appearing in Publick to the laſt, his Life was one continued Scene of Labour and Toil. His cloſe Study and conſtant Preaching (frequently three times a Day) did greatly exhauſt his Animal Spirits, and enfeeble his Strength. Yet to the laſt he diſcovered a becoming Zeal againſt the prevailing Errors of the Day, for he knew no Face in the Pulpit; his Soul was too great to balk any Truth that he own'd, for the Frowns or Flatteries of the Greateſt; and I may ſay of him as the Apoſtle does of himſelf, *That he had obtain'd Mercy to be faithful.*

With what Application of Mind, and unwearied Diligence did he diſcharge his Paſtoral Office, not only preaching in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, but in viſiting thoſe under his Charge, incouraging the ſerious, gently reproving the froward, and inſtructing thoſe that oppos'd themſelves; defending the great Truths of the Goſpel, and ſetting them in a clear Light?

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As for the Matter of his Sermons, it was always ſolid and ſubſtantial. He diſpenſed the Bread of Life to nouriſh your Souls, and not Curioſities to indulge your Fancies. Chriſt Crucified was the Sum of his Preaching. He took care to deliver the great and important Truths of the Goſpel, in *ſound* as well as *acceptable Words*. He did not debaſe the Majeſty of Divine Truths, by a ſordid Negligence of Speech; but ſpoke in a Stile correct and ſtrong, as became the Oracles of God. His Notions were not only weighty, but there was a conquering Force in his well-choſen Expreſſions; for as *Job* ſays, *How forcible are right Words!* In ſhort, *He was a Workman that needed not to be aſham'd, rightly dividing the Word of Truth*; and giving to every Soul a Portion in due ſeaſon. He preach'd ſo as to ſave himſelf and them that heard him. A fervent Love to Chriſt and the Souls of Men ſeem'd to reign in his Breaſt, as appear'd by his flaming but regular Zeal to exalt the Glory of the Redeemer, and promote the Salvation of Souls. He did not count his Life dear to himſelf, ſo that he might finiſh his Courſe with Joy, and the Miniſtry which he had receiv'd of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to teſtify the Goſpel of the Grace of God. And alas! 'tis to be fear'd, that in Judgment to us who ſurvive, God has remov'd this excellent Perſon from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant; where this Star ſhines with an unfading Luſtre, tho it diſpenſes no Light and Influence to us below. And that which aggravates our Loſs, is this, that this Uſeful Miniſter is remov'd in the * midſt

* *He was about five and thirty when he died.*

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of his Days. His Removal is ſudden to us, but 'twas not ſurprizing to him: for he liv'd in the conſtant expectation of his Death, as may be collected from an Expreſſion he us'd more than once in Family-Prayer a little before his Deceaſe: He beg'd of God, *That the tottering of his frail Tabernacle might always put him in mind of its falling down.* And at the beginning of his laſt Illneſs he told a near Relation, he ſhould *ſtudy no more.*

A little after he ſaid, *O how ſweet will Reſt be to me after my weary Labour!* At another time he expreſs'd his Propriety in God: *God* (ſays he) *is my God, and I have his gracious Preſence with me. O how precious is the Blood of Chriſt, and how excellent the Union betwixt Chriſt and Believers! for 'tis indiſſoluble.* And when refreſh'd once with taking ſomething that was agreeable, he cry'd out, *O how refreſhing will be the Streams of the River of God!* But his Diſtemper affecting his Head, he ſoon grew delirious, and a few Days put an end to his Excellent and Valuable Life. His Body we have committed to the Duſt, his Soul is fled to the Regions of Light and Love, where he reſts from all his Labours, and is ſeated on ſo high a Throne, that neither the Malice of Devils, nor the Strife of Tongues can be able to reach him. Therefore ſtop your Tears; our Friend is not dead, but ſleepeth; *and thoſe that ſleep in Jeſus will God bring with him.*

I ſhall only addreſs my ſelf to the Church in particular, and then to you that were his Auditors in general, and ſo conclude.

1. To the Church in particular. It muſt be own'd that you have loſt an Able Paſtor, one that fed you according to the Integrity of his Heart,

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Heart, and guided you according to the Skilfulneſs of his Hands; ſo that you have abundant cauſe of Mourning: But do not altogether weep for him, but weep for your ſelves and your Children, that you made no better Improvement under his excellent Miniſtry, who upon his Death-bed expreſs'd a great Concern for you, and died in the Faith that God would take care of his own Work. He was very deſirous to have ſat down with you at the Holy Table of the Lord once more; but before the Day came wherein that Ordinance was to have been celebrated, God took him to the Marriage-Supper of the Lamb. Let me intreat you to ſtudy your ſelves and this Providence, and may the Language of it be intelligible to every one of you. *Remember him that had the Rule over you; whoſe Faith follow conſidering the end of his Converſation.* And let me exhort you to fly to that God by Prayer, who has the Reſidue of the Spirit, that he would anoint another for his Service, and ſend you a Paſtor after his own Heart. God has made a Breach upon you, lay your Mouths in the Duſt, and humble your Souls; and let all preſent put up thoſe Petitions for this Church which *Moſes* did for *Iſrael: Let the Lord, the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh, ſet a Man over this Congregation,* Numb. 22. 16, 17. *that may go out before you, and that may go in before you, that may lead you out and bring you in, that this Congregation of the Lord may not be as Sheep without a Shepherd.*

May God ſuddenly ſet up a burning and ſhining Light in this Golden Candleſtick: May a Star ariſe here, whoſe Light may refreſh, and whoſe Influences ſhall ſpread, and laſt long.

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2. To you that were the conſtant Auditors of the deceas'd Miniſter. Conſider how indulgent and favourable God has been to ſeveral of you, even in this dark Diſpenſation: He has remov'd one that was ripe for Heaven; but how diſmal had been your State, if he had call'd you that are unprepar'd! If you drop into the Grave while you are unprovided for Eternity, you ſink beyond the Reſerves of Mercy. O adore the Patience and Long-ſuffering of God, that you are yet alive, and have one Call more from this Pulpit, and another very Awful one from the Grave of that Perſon who us'd to fill it. His Death calls upon you to repent, and turn to cloſe with Chriſt, and make ſure of Heaven. Surely you cannot but feel ſome Emotions in your Breaſts, when you think you ſhall never ſee nor hear your painful Miniſter more. And methinks the Rocks within you ſhould flow, when you think that he preached himſelf to Death, and you have not yet entertain'd that Jeſus whom he preach'd. 'Tis true, God gave him ſeveral Seals of his Miniſtry, which was the Joy of his Heart, and will be his Crown in the Day of the Lord.

But if you who were only Hearers will continue ſo, he will be a ſwift Witneſs againſt you in the Day of God. For tho one Place held you and him in this World, you'l have very different Habitations in the next. He ſhall eternally ſolace himſelf in boundleſs Rivers of Pleaſure; but you ſhall be eternally plung'd into a bottomleſs Lake of Fire. But let me intreat you by all that is ſacred, by the Joys of Heaven and the Torments of Hell, by the Intereſt of your never-dying Souls, by Chriſt's bloody Sweat in the Garden, and his Agony

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on the Croſs, that you immediately cloſe with Chriſt, and receive him as offer'd in the Goſpel; ſubmitting to his Scepter, as well as depending on his Sacrifice; that you may eternally be lodg'd in the Boſom of his Love.

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A

SERMON

Preach'd at the Funeral

Of the Reverend

Mr. *Hercules Collins*,

Late Miniſter of the Goſpel;

Who died the 4th of *October*, 1702. and was Inter'd the 9th of the ſame Month.

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TO THE

Church of Christ,

Lately under the

Pastoral Care of the Deceas'd Mr. HERCULES COLLINS.

Beloved in our Lord,

THE severe Strokes of Divine Providence, in removing so fast those that labour in the Word and Doctrine, *cannot but occasion a great many sad and gloomy Thoughts. Surely our Hearts tremble for several Churches, as good old* Eli's

Eli's *did for the Ark of God. May theſe Rebukes awaken the ſlumbering, and quicken the luke-warm Profeſſors of the Age; that our Stupidity may not occaſion ſuch a Complaint as was once made of the* Jews, *that they* regarded not the Works of the Lord, nor conſider'd the Operation of his Hands.

The Epicureans *deny'd God's governing Providence, and repreſented him as an idle Spectator of Human Affairs; and, indeed they do little leſs who account for all Events by ſecond Cauſes, as if the Hand of God had nothing to do with them.*

But the Holy Scriptures, which give the beſt account of the Doctrine of Providence, aſſure us, That the moſt minute things are under the Divine Care. Our Bleſſed Saviour is expreſs, that a Hair cannot drop from our Heads, nor a Sparrow fall to the Ground without our Father's Permiſſion. And I obſerve, that tho Job *loſt his Eſtate by Injuſtice and Violence, he acknowledges a hand of Providence in the Changes that attended him; and therefore as he own'd the Bounty of God in giving, ſo he confeſſes his Juſtice in taking from him what he had enjoy'd:* The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.

Now

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Now if it be a favourable Providence, when God bleſſes a People with an able Miniſter; then certainly the Removal of ſuch a one by Death muſt be a ſad ſign of the Divine Diſpleaſure; eſpecially when, according to the Courſe of Nature, he might have been uſeful for many Years to come. This, my Brethren, you might have hop'd for from your late Paſtor, who was ſuddenly ſnatch'd from you. Your Loſs is great, but Heaven can relieve you under it. The Stream indeed that formerly refreſh'd you is dry'd up; but the Fountain is inexhauſtible: The borrow'd Light that you enjoy'd is eclips'd, but the Sun of Righteouſneſs will ever ſhine with an unfading Luſtre; for he is the ſame to Day, Yeſterday, and for Ever: and let ſuch Thoughts as theſe be ſome revival under this terrible Stroke.

My Brethren,

The Subject of the enſuing Diſcourſe is weighty and ſerious, tho the Management of it ſinks below its Dignity. However I am content to be reckon'd in the low Claſs of Writers, if I can any way promote the common Edification of the Children of God, or be a happy Inſtrument in the Divine Hand, to ſave one Soul from Death. And

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if you, at whoſe Requeſt I preach'd, and do now publiſh this Sermon, reap any Profit by it, may God have all the Glory, whoſe due it is, and let me have an Intereſt in your Prayers,

Who am your Servant

for Jeſus ſake,

JOHN PIGGOTT.

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MAT. XXIV. 44.

Therefore be ye alſo ready; for in ſuch an Hour as you think not, the Son of Man cometh.

HOW Death will approach us, we cannot tell; whether we ſhall have previous Notice by Sickneſs, or be cut off by a ſudden Stroke, is a Secret ſeal'd up in the Counſels of Heaven. Yet this we know, *that it is appointed unto Men once to die.* Our Days are determin'd, as well as the Bounds of our Habitations fix'd; and He that is the Rector of the World, ſends into it, and calls out of it how and whom he pleaſes.

Indeed the innumerable Diſeaſes to which Human Bodies are incident, ſince the Sin of our firſt Parents, which let Death into this lower World, may cauſe us rather to admire that any live, than that ſo many languiſh and die; for 'tis by nothing leſs than a Succeſſion of Wonders, that the frail and uncertain Life of Man is preſerv'd from its infant State, to its maturer Age. And when Life is preſerv'd longeſt,

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longeſt, 'tis conſtantly waſting, and we daily decline towards the Grave, as the Sun does towards the Earth when 'tis ſetting, and uſhers in the ſad and ſilent Night. And every Day's Experience convinces us, that nothing can ward off the fatal Blow; but Miniſters die as well as their People. *All things come alike to all, and there is one Event to the Righteous and to the Wicked.*

Eccl. 9. 2.

It has been eſteem'd an inſtance of God's infinite Wiſdom and condeſcending Goodneſs, that the Treaſure of the Goſpel is committed to Earthen Veſſels; I mean, that God imploys thoſe to preach who are of the ſame Frame and Make with the People to whom they preach. But (as one obſerves) that which is a Happineſs in one reſpect, is a Diſadvantage in another, *viz.* That tho they are ever ſo eminent and uſeful, they muſt die as well as their Hearers. *Your Fathers, where are they? and the Prophets, do they live for ever?*

Now ſince none ſhall be exempted from Death, but thoſe that are found alive at Chriſt's ſecond Coming; and the hour of Death, and the time of our Lord's appearance being equally unknown, and conſequently uncertain as to us, the Advice and Command of our Saviour in the Text, is very ſeaſonable; eſpecially conſidering the occaſion of this ſolemn Meeting, the ſad Inſtance of Mortality before us: for what can we imagine could be more properly the Voice of this Providence, than the Words juſt now mention'd?

Therefore be ye alſo ready; for in ſuch an Hour as you think not, the Son of Man cometh.

In the beginning of this Chapter we find, that upon the Diſciples ſhewing our Lord the Buildings

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ings of the Temple, he takes occaſion to inform them, that in a little time that Place ſhould be entirely demoliſh'd; ſo *that there ſhould not be left one Stone upon another that ſhould not be thrown down.* Upon receiving of this Notice, they are very inquiſitive to know, *When* Ver. 3. *theſe things ſhould be, and what ſhould be the ſigns of his Coming, and of the End of the World.* The firſt Enquiry, *When ſhall theſe things be?* plainly refers to what our Saviour had been ſpeaking of before, *viz.* The Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*; but the other Queſtion was, concerning *the Signs of Chriſt's Coming, and the End of the World.*

Now 'tis not improbable, that the Reaſon of the Diſciples putting theſe two Queſtions together, might be the Apprehenſion they had, that the general Judgment would be immediately after the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*; for this Opinion ſeems to have prevail'd in the Apoſtles Days. But however that was, this I think is very evident, that the Return which our Saviour gave to the latter of the aforemention'd Queries, does refer to our Lord's ſecond Coming to judg Angels and Men at the End of the World; as when he ſpeaks of his Coming *in the Clouds of Heaven with Power and* Ver. 30, 31. *great Glory. And he ſhall ſend his Angels with a great Sound of a Trumpet, and they ſhall gather together his Elect from the four Winds, from one end of Heaven to the other.*

Our Lord, a little after this, ſignifies how great a Secret the particular time of the General Judgment is; *But of that Day and Hour* Ver. 36. *knoweth no Man, no, not the Angels in Heaven, but my Father only.* This could not be ſpoken with reference to the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, becauſe

becauſe our Saviour did exactly foretel the ſad Cataſtrophe of the Jewiſh Temple and State. Now underſtanding this of our Lord's ſecond famous Coming; yet it ſeems very ſtrange, that any Secrets ſhould be lock'd up from him, who eternally lay in the Boſom of the Father; that He who was the *Wiſdom of God*, and ordain'd to be the Judg of the World, ſhould not know the preciſe time of that Judgment: *Of that Day and Hour knows no Man, i. e.* the appointed * Seaſon and Time; *No, not the Angels in Heaven, but my Father only.* There are many things ſaid by Learned Men to ſolve this Difficulty, which I have not time to recite: That which ſeems beſt to clear it, is to diſtinguiſh betwixt the Human and Divine Nature of our Saviour; for tho as God he knew all things, yet as Man he did not. The Human Underſtanding of our Saviour was Finite, therefore could not be Omniſcient. Moreover, thoſe Communications of Light which the Deity of Chriſt made to his Human Soul, were purely Arbitrary; therefore, as Man, he had more Wiſdom and Knowledg at one time than at another, or elſe he could not have been ſaid
Luke 2. 52. *to grow in Wiſdom.*

But I go on: Our Bleſſed Saviour in ſeveral Verſes preceding the Text, gives an Account how ſudden and ſurprizing his Coming at the

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* *The word ὥρα is not to be taken ſtrictly for that meaſure of time commonly called* an Hour; *this were to make our Saviour's Expreſſion very flat, after that he has deny'd that* the Day *is known, to deny that they know* the Hour: *for if they do not know* the Day, *much leſs* the Hour, *&c. The four Seaſons of the Year are by the* Greeks *call'd* ὧραι, *and in this Senſe the Word is us'd, not only in the aforemention'd Text, but in other Places. ABp.* Tillotſon *in his* 9th *Poſthumous Vol.* p. 267.

End

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End of the World would be. *But as the days of* Noe *were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.* The People of the Old World apply'd themselves to the business and diversions of Life, *until the Day that* Noah *enter'd into the Ark; and knew not until the Flood came and took them all away: So shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.* Upon which our Saviour presses to constant Vigilancy: and in the next words represents his sudden Coming, by a Thief's stealing upon a Man at an unknown and uncertain Hour of the Night, when he has not the least expectation of being disturb'd or injur'd. *For* (says he) *know this*, or, as some think it may be better render'd, *You do know this, that if the good Man of the House had known in what Watch the Thief would come, he would have watch'd, and would not have suffer'd his House to be broken up.* q. d. If every Housholder would be thus careful to prevent the spoiling of his Goods, and the loss of his earthly Treasure; how much more reason is there for your providing against my Coming? for should it be while you are unprepar'd, you must sustain an infinite loss, that can never be repair'd. Ver. 38,39.

Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an Hour as you think not, the Son of Man cometh.

Our Blessed Saviour frequently calls himself the *Son of Man*, who as such is to be our Judg; and under that Character he shall come, with all the Ensigns of Pomp and Terror, at the end of the World, to pass a definitive Sentence on the Quick and the Dead. The Nearness of our Lord's Approach, above sixteen hundred Years ago, was represented by his *standing before the door*. How suddenly

that Door may open, and the Books too, out of which we ſhall be judged, remains conceal'd from the World; God having laid up this Secret in Sacred Darkneſs, that we might be *always ready*. I allow that the Coming mention'd in our Text does refer to Chriſt's ſecond Solemn Appearance as Judg; yet I ſee no reaſon but it may be improv'd with reſpect to our Lord's other Coming previous to that: I mean, to ſummon us out of the World by Death, which unalterably binds us over to the final Aſſize; for the Day of Death does as effectually determine the State of Individuals, as the laſt Judgment ſhall that of the whole World. The ſuddenneſs of its coming may be the ſame, and the State of every Soul will be the ſame; for after Death there will be no opportunity for correcting the diſorders of Life, and conſequently the danger of being unprepar'd for Death muſt needs be the ſame as to be unprovided for the Day of Judgment.

Therefore be ye alſo ready, &c. The Words are a genuine Inference from the Conſideration of Chriſt's ſecond ſudden Appearance to judg the World. Wherein we may obſerve,

Firſt, A very Important Duty exhorted to, *i. e. To get ready for that Awful Day.*

Secondly, A forcible Reaſon to perſuade to this Duty, in theſe words; *For in ſuch an Hour as you think not, the Son of Man cometh.*

I ſhall (as God ſhall aſſiſt) ſpeak to each of theſe, and then make ſome Improvement ſutable to my Text, and the ſad Occaſion of preaching from it.

Firſt,

First, I am to open this Important Duty to which our Saviour preſſes us in the Text; and to tell you wherein conſiſts a true readineſs for Death, or the Second Coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And here I ſhall not ſcruple to make uſe of the common diſtinction of an *Habitual*, and an *Actual* Readineſs.

1. I am to conſider a readineſs for Death and Judgment as *Habitual*, which conſiſts *in a relative Change in the State, and a real Change in the Nature of a Man.* For we muſt remember that by the Apoſtacy of *Adam* we are not only made guilty, but polluted Creatures. The former renders us obnoxious to the Juſtice, and the latter odious to the infinite Holineſs of the Divine Nature; by the one we have loſt our *Right*, and by the other our *Meetneſs* for the enjoyment of God. Now we cannot be prepar'd for our Lord's coming, unleſs the former be reſtor'd, and the latter be recover'd.

But, (1.) In order to a readineſs for Death and Judgment, there muſt be *a relative Change in our State.* All the Elect are by Nature legally dead; the Law curſes every one that is not perfectly obedient to it. The Apoſtle *Paul* in various places of his Epiſtle to the *Romans* proves, that all Men by Nature are under the damnatory Sentence of the Law. *We have prov'd* (ſays he) *both* Jews *and* Gentiles, *that they are all under Sin.* There are not any of the choſen of God, but by Nature are Children of Wrath. The firſt *Adam* was related to every one of us, both as a common Father and as a Federal Head: ſo that we muſt be conſider'd as Parties in the firſt Co- Rom. 3. 9.

venant that God made with him, and conſequently that we ſinn'd and fell with him in his firſt Tranſgreſſion, and are thereby brought under the Curſe of the Law. Now we muſt be brought out of this State of Guilt and Wrath into a State of Righteouſneſs; which is effectually done by the *Imputation* of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt to the Soul, which it receives by Faith alone.

By the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, I mean his perfect and compleat Obedience to the Law, and his ſuffering the Penalty of it; the whole of what our Saviour did and ſuffer'd, his active and paſſive Obedience, which is imputed or reckon'd to every believing Sinner. For the Rom. 10. 4. Apoſtle ſays, *Chriſt is the end of the Law for Righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.* As the Diſobedience of the firſt *Adam* makes us Sinners, ſo the perfect ſinleſs Obedience of the 2 Cor. 5. 21. ſecond *Adam* makes us Righteous. *For he hath made him to be Sin for us who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him.* * Every Phraſe here is wonderfully emphatical; *He hath made him to be Sin for us*: This ſuppoſes Chriſt's being ſubſtituted in the room and ſtead of Sinners, and that he ſuſtain'd the Puniſhment due to Sin, the Guilt thereof being charged upon him as our Sponſor and Surety. 'Twas not the Filth of Sin, or the Obliquity of any Act that could be ſuppos'd to be in the Nature of our Saviour, which was more pure than the unſtained Light. *He was Holy, Harmleſs, Undefil'd, and ſeparate from Sinners.* For tho he was *made*

* Vide *Turrettini de Satisfactione Chriſti Diſputationes*, p. 117, 118.

Sin,

Sin, 'tis ſaid he knew no Sin, *i. e.* by an experimental approbative Knowledg; to *know* in the *Hebrew* Dialect, ſignifies to love, to act, to like. Therefore, *his being made Sin*, muſt intend his being judicially charg'd in our ſtead with the Guilt of Sin, and bearing the Puniſhment due to it: for *Sin*, in the Holy Scriptures. by a Metonymy of the Cauſe for the Effect, is put for the Puniſhment of Sin, as the Scriptures, in the Margin ſhew. And ſometimes the † Hebrew word for Sin, by a Metonymy of the Adjunct for the Subject, ſignifies the Piacular Victim, or the Expiatory Sacrifice it ſelf. *He hath made him*, &c. *i. e.* He hath conſtituted or appointed him to be a Sacrifice for our Sins, as the * *Greek* word is us'd. *That we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him:* By *the Righteouſneſs of God*, is not meant the eſſential Righteouſneſs of Chriſt as God, which he has in common with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, for that cannot be communicated either to Angels or Men; But the Righteouſneſs here ſpoken of, is the Righteouſneſs of the Mediator, and may be call'd the *Righteouſneſs of God*, as 'tis the Righteouſneſs of him who is God-man, which was neceſſary to his Suretiſhip: for no Perſon but he who was God, of the nature of his Father, and Man of the ſubſtance of his Virgin Mother, could have *wrought out and brought in ſuch an everlaſting Righteouſneſs, as ſhould finiſh Tranſgreſſion and make an end of Sin.* Now until we are intereſted in this Righteouſneſs, we

Gen. 4.7,13. Zech. 14.19.

† *Lev.* 5. 9, &c.
* *Mark* 3. 14. καὶ ἐποίησε δώδεκα. So Joh. 6. 15.

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are under a broken Covenant of Works, the Curſe of the Law, and Wrath of God. And if a Man cannot lift up his Head under the heavy Guilt of one Sin, when God ſets it in his view, and charges it on his Conſcience, how can that Perſon live? Live! did I ſay? how can that Perſon think of dying, that lies under the Guilt of Millions of Tranſgreſſions? O how dreadful muſt be the proſpect of Death to ſuch an one! when he conſiders that the Judg he is going to appear before, is that very Jeſus, whoſe Spirit he has griev'd and reſiſted, whoſe Love he has ſlighted, and whoſe Blood he has deſpis'd and trampled upon.

Therefore (Sinner) if ever thou wouldſt be ready for the coming of the Lord, *ſubmit thy ſelf to the Righteouſneſs of God*, and labour *to be found in Chriſt, not having thy own Righteouſneſs, which is of the Law; but that which is through the Faith of Jeſus Chriſt, the Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith.* Chriſt is *Jehovah our Righteouſneſs*, and we can make mention of no other Righteouſneſs with advantage to our Juſtification. By the firſt *Adam*'s Sin we loſt the Robe of our Innocency; by the ſecond *Adam*'s Obedience and Sufferings, we obtain a Garment of more Glory and greater Security. For they that have receiv'd this Change of Raiment, tho at Death they lay down their vile Bodies in the duſt, yet being thus cloth'd, they'l not be found naked, but fitly adorn'd to enter in with the Bridegroom to the Marriage-ſupper of the Lamb.

Phil. 3. 9.

(2.) To make us habitually fit for Death and Judgment, there muſt be a real Change wrought in our Natures.

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A Change must pass upon all the Faculties of the Human Mind. The Darkness of the Understanding must be scatter'd with a pure Beam of Light from Heaven. Persons before they are regenerate are said to be *Darkness*; but when renew'd in the Spirit of their Minds, to be *Light in the Lord*. The Obstinacy of the *Will* must be overcome, and the Will inclin'd to chuse that which is good: *Thy People shall be willing in the day of thy Power*. Again, the Affections must be diverted from improper Objects, and plac'd on Him who is infinitely desirable and lovely. The defil'd Conscience must be purg'd from dead Works, by the sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus. The Memory must be made the sacred Repository of the Divine Precepts and Promises; the former to direct, the latter to quicken and encourage in the discharge of true Evangelical Obedience. In a word, as all the Faculties of the Soul are truly ennobled by the Grace of God in this Change; so the consequence will be, that all the Members of our Bodies will be employ'd as Instruments of Righteousness unto Holiness. For that Divine Principle and Habit, which by Omnipotent Grace is convey'd into the Soul, to raise it from a moral Death to a spiritual Life, will exert it self in sutable Deportments towards God and Man: So that such an one will live a Life of Communion with God, and Conformity to him; for he that is truly regenerate has not only a negative, but a positive Holiness: He not only *denies all Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, but lives righteously and soberly and godly in this present World*; as one that *looks for the blessed Hope and glorious Appearance*

Tit. 2. 12, 13.

pearance of the Great God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ. And let me tell you, whatever pompous Pretence or glittering Shew Men make as to an outward Profession, if they are not regenerated and renew'd, cleans'd and sanctify'd by the Grace of God and the Spirit of Christ, 'tis all insignificant and vain, as to their readiness for the Coming of the Son of God.

For no Person can enter into the new *Jerusalem* without a new Heart; and the beatifick Vision is promis'd only to those that are holy:

Mat. 5. 8. *Blessed are the Pure in Heart, for they shall see God. Follow Peace with all Men, and* * *Holi-*

Heb. 12. 14. *ness, without which no Man shall see the Lord.* And † one thinks that the degree of Vision in *Heaven* is according to the degree of Sanctification. However that be, this is certain, that Persons must be made meet, before they shall be made Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. And when Persons are thus far advanc'd in their readiness for Death and Judgment; then, *whether they live, they live to the Lord, and whether they die, they die to the Lord; so that whether living or dying, they are the Lord's.* But I proceed.

2. There is also an *actual Readiness* for Death, and the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The former refer'd to our *State*, this latter to our *Frame.* The one puts us in a safe Condition, and the other into a comfortable one; by one we are secur'd with respect to Eternity, and by the other enabled to view Death

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* Χώρις ἕ, the Masculine Article sheweth that it must be refer'd to ἁγιασμῷ.

† Κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν καθαρότητος. Naz.

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in its approaches with Joy and ſtrong Conſolation.

Now an *actual Readineſs* for Death and the coming of Chriſt, may be conſider'd as conſiſting in, and as being promoted by theſe following things.

1. In a conſcientious avoiding thoſe Sins that otherwiſe would darken the Mind, and fill it with too much Horror, either to be ready or deſirous to leave this World; ſuch as, *Senſuality, Oppreſſion, and Uncharitableneſs.* I mention theſe Sins, becauſe our Saviour takes notice of them, and warns againſt 'em in this very Caſe. *Take heed to your ſelves, leſt at any time your Hearts be overcharg'd with Surfeiting and Drunkenneſs and Cares of this Life, and ſo that Day come upon you at unawares.* By *Surfeiting and Drunkenneſs* I do not barely underſtand thoſe two Sins, but all the ſad effects of Gluttony and Intemperance; which as they ſtupify the animal Spirits, ſo they make the Mind inſenſible; they abate the Appetite, and ſpoil the Reliſh of Spiritual things. And then for Uncharitableneſs, 'tis particularly warn'd againſt on this occaſion: *The Lord was wroth with that wicked Servant that would not forgive his Fellow-Servant a few Pence, and commanded him to be deliver'd to the Tormentors.* A Man of a rigid implacable uncharitable Spirit is very unfit to live, but I am ſure he is much more unfit to die; for how can ſuch a Man expect the pardon of Myriads of Sins from the Judg of the World, when he will not forgive his poor Brother a trifling Debt or a ſmall Offence?

2. Endeavour after a Weanedneſs from this World, and all the Enjoyments of Senſe. As

'tis

'tis inconſiſtent to ſerve God and Mammon, ſo 'tis morally impoſſible to be *actually ready* for the other, while we are anxiouſly ſollicitous about the Affairs of this World. The Cares of this Life are of a diſtracting nature; and a State of Wealth as well as that of Poverty, is attended with many Temptations and Snares: And indeed a Rich Man is commonly more diſtant from an *actual readineſs* to die, than he that is poor; becauſe his Eyes are dazl'd with the Glories, and his Heart is faſten'd to the Treaſures that he has in this World: ſo that the very thoughts of leaving his Wealth and Conveniences behind him, create an inward Pain that is very acute, like the tearing of his Heart from the midſt of his Bowels.

And let me tell you, there are ſome good Men, who having abundance in this World, tho they are *habitually* fit to die, yet find it extremely difficult to work up their Minds to a chearful diſpoſedneſs to leave the World; yea, tho they are almoſt ſunk into the Grave with Age, yet with what kind of Uneaſineſs and Paſſion do they look behind 'em, like *Lot*'s Wife when ſhe was leaving *Sodom?* Alas! whatever we affect with too ſtrong a Paſſion, when 'tis ſnatch'd from us, or we from it, it occaſions a proportionable Pain: therefore if we would ſet looſe by the things of this World, and be always ready to quit them, we ought to have the ſame thoughts of them in the time of our Health, as Men ordinarily have when they are ſick and dying.

It may be, ſome that hear me now, at one time or other, have had *the Sentence of Death within themſelves*, and have expected every Moment when their Souls would have diſlodg'd from

from their Bodies. Pray what were your thoughts then of this World, and thoſe Enjoyments in it that now ſtrike ſo hard upon your Senſes? Did you not then think that they were all Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, and that they had not that in them which your flattering Expectations promis'd you? When you thought that you were juſt leaving the World, did you not look on it as a contemptible Trifle? Labour to recover the ſame Thoughts again now you are in Health, which will help you to ſit looſe to this World and the Enjoyments of it, and to promote your *actual* readineſs for Death and Judgment. I ſhall cloſe this Head with the Advice of the Apoſtle: *But this, I ſay, Brethren, the time is ſhort; it remaineth, that both they that have Wives be as tho they had none, and they that weep as tho they wept not, and they that rejoice as tho they rejoic'd not, and they that buy as tho they poſſeſs'd not, and they that uſe this World as not abuſing it; for the faſhion of this World paſſeth away.*

3. An *actual Readineſs* for Death and Judgment conſiſts in a freedom from the *fear of Death*. I do not mean from the *natural* Fear of Death, but from that which is tormenting and *ſlaviſh*. The Love of Life is not more natural than the Fear of Death, and therefore the Son of God himſelf does not ſeem to be exempted from it; the reluctancies which our Saviour diſcover'd againſt his dying, did not in the leaſt impeach the Rectitude of his Nature: there were no Irregularities in the Affections of his Human Soul, which always mov'd agreeably to the Quality of thoſe Objects about which they were converſant. Therefore, I ſay,

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ſay, ſuch a *natural Fear* of Death is not ſinful, nor inconſiſtent with an *actual Readineſs* for it.

Indeed many that are *habitually fit* to die, are ſo much indiſpos'd by a ſlaviſh Fear of Death, that they earneſtly deſire longer Life, and cry out with the Pſalmiſt, *O ſpare me, that I may recover Strength, before I go hence, and be no more.* With what Concern and Uneaſineſs did good *Hezekiah* receive that Meſſage,
Iſa. 38. 1. *Set thine Houſe in order, for thou ſhalt die and not live?* For tho he had walk'd with God and liv'd to him, tho *he had done that which was right in the ſight of the Lord, and had done it with a perfect Heart*; yet upon the notice of his Diſſolution, when he underſtood he ſhould be remov'd from his agreeable Society, and ſuddenly ſink down into the Solitude of the
Ver. 2, 3. Grave, *He turn'd his Face toward the Wall, and pray'd unto the Lord,——and wept ſore.* The A-
Heb. 2. 15. poſtle ſpeaks of ſome, *who thro a predominant fear of Death, are all their Life-time ſubject to Bondage.* And indeed there is too much of this Fear obtains upon thoſe that are *habitually fit* to die; for tho they have receiv'd the *Spirit of Adoption*, yet at ſometimes they are as full of Doubts and Fears as thoſe who are under the *Spirit of Bondage:* 'tis no unuſual thing for them that are *dead to the Law by the Body of Chriſt*, to imagine themſelves *ſtill under it.* They that are in a very ſafe State, may be in a very legal Frame, eſpecially ſuch People as are ſomewhat addicted to Melancholy.

Now the beſt way for a Believer to overcome this, is to conſider what Chriſt hath done for him. This the Apoſtle plainly intimates, who having ſaid, that *the Sting of Death is Sin*, immediately adds, *But thanks be to God, that giveth*

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us the Victory thro our Lord Jesus Christ, i. e. The Victory over Sin, and consequently over Death: *For the Sting of Death is Sin.* Now Christ having by his Death fully satisfy'd for Sin, Death hereby is disarm'd of its Sting and Terror, the Guilt of Sin is remov'd by the Merit of our Saviour's Blood, and the Power of it destroy'd by the Efficacy of his Spirit: And when these are witness'd to the Conscience, and the Person is well assur'd concerning 'em, the slavish Fears of Death do vanish; which by the way, should make Christ more precious to our Souls, and should engage us to love him equally to the strong Obligations we are under to him.

One of the antient *Romans* (as Dr. *Bates* has observ'd) "did highly celebrate the *Astronomers*, who discover'd the true cause of the "Eclipses of the Sun and Moon, and freed "the World from the double darkness of Ignorance and Fear; for before that discovery, "Men believ'd the obscuring of those great "Lights were the fainting Fits of Nature, "and mortal Symptoms threatning an universal Calamity."

But how much more Praise, Honour and Glory is due to our Blessed Saviour, *who hath abolish'd Death, and brought Life and Immortality to light through the Gospel*, and has assur'd us, that the Death of a Believer is but a Passage out of this World to a better; where such shall never be at a loss by reason of Darkness, but live under the immediate Rays of Divine Glory and Love?

But in all this I would not be mistaken by those that are unconverted: You, Sirs, are not the Persons that should not fear Death, for

for you have all the reaſon in the World to fear it; for when you ſee Death riding on a pale Horſe, what can you expect ſhould follow but fiery Indignation and an eternal Hell, which will ſtrike your guilty Minds with an infinite Terror? *For who among you can dwell with devouring Fire? who among you can dwell with everlaſting Burnings?* Indeed ſuch as are freed from the Fears of Death, and the Bondage that is conſequent thereupon, can welcome Death in its approaches, and ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *Tho I walk thro the Valley of the ſhadow of Death, I will fear no Evil, for thou art with me.* They look on Death as a Meſſenger ſent to call them home to their Father's Houſe, where they ſhall enjoy a Freedom from all moral and penal Evils, and be rais'd to the Enjoyment of the higheſt poſitive Good. *For in God's Preſence is Fulneſs of Joy, and at his right Hand there are Pleaſures for evermore.*

Iſa. 33. 13.

4. If we would be actually ready for Death, we muſt be diligent in the diſcharge of every Duty, and in the exerciſe of every Grace, as the Place and Circumſtances wherein God has fix'd us, do call for. Whatever God has enjoin'd us, whether publick or private, whether a Branch of our general or ſpecial Calling, whether perſonal or relative, we ſhould be always ready to diſcharge theſe Obligations, to anſwer our Abilities, and improve all the Opportunities that God gives us for his Service; for the leaſt allow'd Omiſſion will fill us with Uneaſineſs and Confuſion. If our Talents are not improv'd, our Hearts will reproach us; and we cannot think of ſtanding with Comfort at the Divine Bar, if we have

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been unfaithful Stewards. Therefore, *let us have our Loins girt about, and our Lamps burning; for bleſſed is that Servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find ſo doing.* One thus imploy'd will have the thoughts of Death ſweeten'd to him, eſpecially if his Graces are vigorous and active, as the Circumſtances of his Condition call for. The Life of every Chriſtian is chequer'd with Mercies and Afflictions; and according to the different States of Sorrow or Triumph, are our active or paſſive Graces to be call'd forth into Exerciſe. So that *we may abound in all the Fruits of Righteouſneſs, which are by Jeſus Chriſt, to the Praiſe and Glory of God the Father.* In a word, do not defer any thing to a Death-bed, that may and ought to be done in the time of Health. Let your Houſe be ſet in order as well as your Soul, and then you'll have nothing to do but to die, when you are call'd hence.

5. Live a Life of Communion with God, and daily wait for your Change, and the Lord's ſecond Coming. If a Believer has for a time been off from his Watch, and intermitted the Exerciſe of Grace, and has not had any Communion with God, the Thoughts of Death will be ſomewhat ſtartling. He that would be always ready to leave this Earth, muſt conſtantly have his Converſation in Heaven. And ſuch a one that's converſant in the other, will be like a Stranger in this World: He walks with God here, and when he leaves the World (to uſe the Words of a dying Saint *) *changes his Room, but not his Company.*

* Vid. *Dr.* Bates *on Death*, p. 128.

God

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God was always with him on Earth, and he ſhall be ever with God in Heaven. I ſhall cloſe this Head with the words of the Apoſtle

1 John 2.28. *John: And now, little Children, abide in him; that when he ſhall appear, we may have Confidence, and not be aſham'd before him at his Coming.*

6. Let us revive in our Minds thoſe Promiſes which gave us incouragement at firſt to come to Chriſt, and venture our Souls upon him. The Spirit of God works by the Word, and every Chriſtian has ſome Word upon which God has caus'd him to hope. Now in order to an *actual Readineſs* for Death, we muſt labour to be putting forth frequent Acts of Faith on Chriſt, thro thoſe Promiſes that have been powerfully impreſs'd on our Minds, and which have encourag'd us to hope in the Mercy of God thro the Redeemer. And here let us obſerve, whether theſe keep us at the foot of Chriſt, and raiſe our eſteem of him; whether they engage to a thorow unaffected Piety, to a cloſe regular Walk with God, and Dependence on him: And if theſe are the Effects, we ſhall be capable of clearing up our Evidences for Heaven, without which we cannot paſs out of this World with Comfort.

Heb. 11. 8. Indeed we read that *Abraham, when he was call'd to go out into a Place which he ſhould after receive for an Inheritance, obey'd; and he went, not knowing whither he went.* But certainly none can be willing to go out of this World into the next, while he doubts whether he ſhall go to Heaven or Hell, whether he ſhall aſcend into the *Hill of God*, or drop into a *Lake of Fire*. To be doubting and dying at the ſame time, is a very uncomfortable thing; yet this has been the Lot of ſome of the Children of God,

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God, who tho they have been *habitually* fit to die, have not been *actually* ready. Therefore as you would avoid being perplex'd and uneasy in your last moments, labour after a well-grounded Assurance of the Divine Favour; which being obtain'd, will enable you to say with old *Simeon*, *Now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace, for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation.*

7. An actual Readiness for Death, and the Coming of Christ, is promoted by the lively and vigorous Representation to our Minds of the Glories of the Heavenly Inheritance. Therefore frequently think of the Weight and Lustre of those Crowns that are prepar'd for the faithful Followers of the Lamb: Think of the Society and Imploy of the Blessed, the Perfection of their Knowledg, Purity and Love, the Magnificence and Grandeur of Christ in his glorified Humanity, and how Millions of obsequious Spirits bow at his Feet. Think again how officious and ready the chief Principalities of the glorious Empire are to convey the Souls of such as die in the Lord thro the vast Regions of Air to their Father's House. And can you think of these things without earnest Desires to depart, and to be with Christ? Surely a good Man that has been long inur'd to such Contemplations, can very easily quit his Body, and very joyfully commend his departing Spirit into his hands that has bought it with his Blood.

Secondly, I proceed now to consider the forcible Reason our Blessed Saviour uses to press this Duty of being *Ready*; *For in such an Hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.* I have

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already ſignified to you, that by the *Coming of Chriſt*, we are to underſtand his ſecond ſolemn Appearance to judg the World, the Certainty of which is here ſuppos'd and taken for granted. But that wherein the force of the Argument lies, is, *That he ſhall come in an Hour we think not of.* When he is leaſt thought of or look'd for, when Men are ſtupid and inſenſible, and do not expect his Coming, then ſhall Mankind be ſurpriz'd with the Appearance of their Judg, as were the Old World with a deſtroying Deluge; *For as a Snare ſhall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of the Earth.* Luke 21,35.

We are as certain that Chriſt will come, as if his Coming were paſt or preſent, as if we now heard the Sound of the laſt Trump, and ſaw the Heavens open, and the Son of God moving towards us thro the Air in the Chariot of a bright Cloud: But we cannot tell whether he'll appear in the firſt or ſecond, in the third or fourth Watch of the Night; ſo that 'tis reaſonable that we watch the whole Night, I mean, that we be *always ready.*

We are as ignorant about the time of our Death, as we are about Chriſt's ſecond Coming; for People are call'd out of this World in an hour they think not of. There is no Place, Time or Company can ſecure us from a ſudden Death.

We read that the ten Virgins were called while ſlumbering, and at Midnight. So, Sinner, God may ſtop thy Breath when thou art moſt ſecure, and call thee hence when thou haſt the leaſt thoughts of thy Departure. *When Sinners cry Peace, Peace, then comes ſudden Deſtruction, as Travail upon a Woman with Child.* Some of you that are hearing this Sermon, before

before Midnight may be laid out for your own Funeral, and the Sound of that Meſſenger's Feet may be at the door, that ſhall carry you to your Grave.

Ahab little thought the Hour of his Death was ſo near, when he reproach'd the Prophet of the Lord, and threw him into Priſon.

Agag was very confident of his living, when he cry'd out, *Surely the Bitterneſs of Death is paſt*: but, alas, in a very little time his Confidence is turn'd into Confuſion; for the Man is *hewn in pieces before the Lord in* Gilgal. 1 Sam. 15. 32. Ver. 33.

Pharaoh in the height of his Rage reſolves to ſatisfy his Luſt, and to divide the Spoil when he purſu'd the *Iſraelites*; but before he could gratify his Ambition, the Sea becomes his Sepulcher.

How often does God ſurprize Sinners with an unexpected Summons to his aweful Tribunal, when like the rich *Epicure* in the Goſpel, they are pleas'd with the Goods they have laid up for many Years, and are flattering themſelves with the expectation of a long and merry Life? but *in a moment they go down to the Duſt*, and God requires their Souls of them in an Hour they thought not of.

The Lamp of Life is ſometimes blown out with a ſudden Blaſt, when there is Plenty of Oil to feed it. Some have their Days cut off in the midſt, their Sun ſets at Noon; while their Bones are moiſten'd with Marrow, they ſink down into the Grave with the Sins of their Youth cleaving to them, and charg'd upon them. How reaſonable therefore is it that we be conſtantly prepar'd to die, ſince we muſt every one ſay with *Iſaac*, *Behold, I know not the Day of my Death*! Therefore if we would

not be ſurpriz'd at the Approaches of Death, or Chriſt's Appearance in the Clouds, when he ſhall come in flaming Fire, let us be *always ready*.

I come now to make ſome Improvement of what I have ſaid. And,

1. What I have ſpoken diſcovers to us both the Wiſdom and the Mercy of God, in concealing from us the particular time of our Death, and the Day of our Lord's Appearing. It muſt be allow'd to be a great Mercy to fallen Creatures, that God hath hid from them future Events; for if we all knew the exact day of our Death, and the preciſe time that our Judg would come, either 'twould unfit us for ſocial Duties and the Civil Concerns of Life, or elſe upon the proſpect of its being very diſtant, would induce us to defer our Preparations, and give our ſelves a looſe to Sin.

If all that die in the flouriſhing Bloom of Youth, knew a little before their Death, that upon ſuch a Day they ſhould paſs from this World to the next; that they ſhould finiſh Time, and enter upon Eternity; how would the innocent Joys of Life be dampt, and their important Buſineſs retarded, and their Uſefulneſs to the Community entirely obſtructed? What Perſon would apply his Thoughts to *Learning* or *Trade*, that knew ſo ſoon as he was fitted for either, he ſhould ſink down into the Duſt of Death? So that ſuch a Knowledg of future Events would be deſtructive to Human Society, and inſtead of furthering the Happineſs of reaſonable Creatures, would prevent their common Uſefulneſs.

There-

Therefore God has in great kindneſs towards us conceal'd from us future Events: And I have often thought that the *Wiſdom* and *Mercy* of God are as much diſplay'd in hiding ſome things from us, as in revealing other things to us. Our days are determin'd, and the general meaſure of Human Life is laid down in Divine Revelation; but the preciſe time of our Death and the Day of Judgment is in great Wiſdom and Goodneſs hid from us, God having reſerv'd the Secrets of his Decrees in his own power, that ſo we might be *always ready.*

2. How much are they to blame who put the evil Day far from them, and exerciſe no ſerious Thoughts about being ready for Death and our Lord's ſecond Coming? That this is ſo in fact, I need not prove; for our own Obſervation will furniſh us with too many ſad Inſtances of this nature.

Young People are ready to conclude, that of courſe they muſt live to be old, tho thouſands younger than they fall at their Right Hand, and ten thouſands at their Left.

Thoſe that are old, think, that ſince they have continued ſo long, there will be the addition of ſome more Years to their Lives: and tho the Scripture aſſures us, that *our Life is but as a Vapour, which appeareth a little time, and then vaniſheth away*; yet theſe People will perſuade themſelves that their own Lives ſhall be more durable and laſting, and promiſe themſelves Years to come: but alas on a ſudden the Lamp of Life goes out, and their unprepared Souls paſs into *outer Darkneſs.*

Whence is it that Men are thus ſtupid, ſince they know not at what hour they may be called out of the World? I anſwer briefly, It ſprings

from their Ignorance of God and of themſelves: They are ignorant of God's *Holineſs* and *Juſtice*, and ſeldom think of any other than the indulgent Attributes of *Mercy*, *Goodneſs* and *Patience*. *Becauſe Sentence againſt an evil Work is not ſpeedily executed, therefore the Hearts of the Children of Men are fully ſet in them to do evil.* It likewiſe ſprings from their Ignorance of themſelves; they are not ſenſible of their loſt Condition in the firſt *Adam*; they don't ſee their Guilt and Pollution in their deſtructive Conſequences; they don't know the Worth of their Souls; therefore they neglect them, and are wholly taken up with the Gratifications of the Animal Nature.

Again, an inordinate Love to this World prevents Mens Preparation for another: Some are intent upon Buſineſs, while others ſpend all their time in Diverſion; but both agree to neglect the moſt important Affair: They find time for every thing, but *the one thing needful*; and like *Archimedes* are drawing Deſigns in the Duſt, till Death breaks their Deſigns, and reduces them to that from whence they were taken.

Again, ſome defer their Preparations, becauſe Death is a melancholy and troubleſom thing to think of; they imagine if they ſhould familiarize the Thoughts of Death, it would damp all the Joys of Life, and infuſe a Bitterneſs into their pleaſant Cups. They think that Conſiderations about Death and Judgment are only proper for the Sick and the Aged, but very unſutable for ſuch as are in Health, in the Greenneſs and Vivacity of Youth. Finally, the vain Opinion that ſome have of their own *Power and Free-will*, to repent and turn at what time they pleaſe, cauſes them to defer their

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getting ready for Eternity, till they arrive to the laſt Moments of their time.

Now all theſe vain Pleas would vaniſh, were People but ſenſible of their Guilt and Pollution, of their own Impotency, and the need they ſtood in of Jeſus Chriſt; then the Thoughts of not knowing the Hour when Chriſt will come as a *Judg*, would be of weight to move them to fly to him preſently as a *Saviour*.

3. How careful ſhould thoſe be, who think that they are ready for Death and Judgment, that they be truly ſo; 'tis a matter of the higheſt Concern, and if you miſtake here, you are loſt for ever. Therefore carefully look into the State of your Souls, and beg of God to ſearch and try you; and if upon a ſtrict Inquiry you can find, that you are juſtified by the Blood of Chriſt, and renewed by the Spirit of Chriſt, adore the Riches of God's diſtinguiſhing Grace.

But if any of you upon Enquiry find your ſelves *unready*, let me exhort you to get *ready* with all poſſible ſpeed: For in ſuch an Hour as you think not, the Son of Man cometh. And that this Exhortation may have its due weight upon your Conſciences, I would ſuggeſt to your ſerious Thoughts the following things.

(1.) Conſider that no time is properly ours but the preſent; therefore 'tis highly reaſonable it ſhould be improved in getting our ſelves ready for Death and Judgment: All future time is as much out of our power, as that which is already paſt. Now ſince 'tis uncertain when we ſhall be called out of the World, 'tis a matter of the greateſt moment, that we take care to be *always ready*. *Boaſt not thy ſelf of to morrow, for thou knoweſt not what a Day may bring forth.*

forth. Some are forming Deſigns for many Years to come, tho they have not a Moment but the preſent one at their diſpoſe. 'Tis only the preſent time that is ours, yet that is ſliding away while I am ſpeaking to you; and *that Moment* in which I pronounced the laſt Sentence, will never return again. We enjoy the precious Commodity of Time, Moment after Moment; God gives not two together, but takes away one when he gives another: how ſhould we then value that we enjoy ſo little of at once? Therefore *let us redeem Time, and give all Diligence to be found of Chriſt in Peace, without Spot and Blame, in the Day of God.*

(2.) Conſider that neither the Hour of Death, nor that of Chriſt's appearing, can tarry beyond the time fixed in the *Counſels of Heaven*, till we prepare our ſelves. Whether we are ready or no, we muſt away at the Divine Summons, and when that will be, we cannot tell. Chriſt will not delay his Coming to Judgment; but at the time appointed by the Father, *He that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry*, whether thou art ready for his Coming or not; therefore be ye always ready.

(3.) Conſider that at Death your State is determined for ever. As the Tree falls, ſo it lies; and as Death leaves you, Judgment will find you. If you die in a State of Sin, under the Wrath and Diſpleaſure of God, you will abide ſo for ever. We can die but once, how does it then concern us to prepare for that which can be but once done, becauſe an Error committed in that, cannot be amended afterwards? O Sirs! Think of it with ſerioufneſs, whenever theſe Souls diſlodg from your Bodies, they'l be fixed in an unalterable State of Happineſs

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pineſs or Miſery. There is no refining Fire to purge you, if you go unprepared into the next World.

(4.) Conſider how great will be the Diſadvantage, if you are ſurprized in an unprepared State. Thy Indiſpoſition juſt before thy Death may be ſo great, that thou mayſt be uncapable of ſerious Reflection. Moreover, how wilt thou do to ſuſtain acute Pains and amazing Terrors? To groan under the Burden of a weak dying Body, and feel the Convulſions of a wounded Spirit at the ſame time! To be ſo ſick that you cannot live, and yet ſo guilty as to be afraid to die, this is a deplorable State indeed! Dr. *Jer. Taylor* tells us of a melancholy Perſon, who ſaw Hell in a Dream or Viſion; whoſe Amazement thereupon was ſuch, that he would have choſen ten times to die, rather than feel again ſo much of that Horror. And certainly ſomething equal, if not exceeding this, does ſeize unprepared Sinners, when they are juſt entring into Eternity. Who can tell the thouſandth part of that Torture, which poor Souls feel from a Senſe of Divine Wrath, when the Horrors of a guilty Mind mix with the Pangs of Death? Again, thy Summons into the other World may be ſo ſudden, that thou mayſt have neither time to conſider what is convenient to be done, nor time to do it in. O how ſad will be the Condition of ſuch who are called before they are ready for Chriſt's Appearing and Kingdom! Do you think you could do any thing to get ready to meet your Judg, if you ſaw him appearing in the Clouds of Heaven with Power and great Glory? If the Elements were melting with fervent Heat, and the Heavens ſhrivel'd up as a Scroll when

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'tis rolled together; if the Mountains were removing, and the Earth ſhaking, and the Stars falling, and the World blazing and cracking about your Ears; what could you do amidſt all that Noiſe and Terror? You would then be for hiding your ſelves in Dens and Rocks of the Earth, and call to the Mountains to fall on you and cover you, from him that ſits on the Throne, and the Wrath of the Lamb.

(5.) Conſider, that if you ſhould defer Preparation to an indefinite *Hereafter*, you are not ſure that God's Spirit will afford you any aſſiſtance, and without that thou canſt neither repent or believe, for both are the Gifts of God. *By Grace you are ſav'd thro Faith, and that not of your ſelves, 'tis the Gift of God, not of Works, leſt any Man ſhould boaſt.* Reſiſt not the Spirit, leſt he ſtrive with you no more; *Can the* Ethiopian *change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots? then may you that are accuſtom'd to do evil, learn* (of your ſelves) *to do well.* I believe you that have had Experience of Divine things, and know what it is *to paſs from Death to Life*, will readily own, that the Will of Man is determin'd by the *ſpecial Grace* of God, when Chriſt is form'd in the Heart, and is become the Object of its Deſire and Choice; and that mere Nature as corrupted can no more reſiſt a pleaſing and agreeable Temptation to Sin, than the faint Breath of a Man can ſtop the rapid ſtreams of a mighty River.

(6.) Conſider the Advantage of being always ready. Death in any dreſs will be no Terror to a prepar'd Soul; and tho the Cry ſhould be at Midnight, *Come ye forth to meet him*, you'l be ready at that ſhort warning with Gladneſs to enter in with the Bridegroom. 'Tis

Mens

Mens being *unready* that makes them fear Death; but the Fears of Death abate, when we know that the Sting is remov'd, and the King of Terrors himſelf is embrac'd as a Friend by that Man that is compleatly ready to die: and indeed 'tis only ſuch that can retain a firmneſs of Spirit under conſtant Pain and lingring Sickneſs, the Harbingers of Death.

To have all quiet and well within, while the Body languiſhes with Pain; to have ſtrong Conſolation and good Hope, as the Anchor of the Soul both ſure and ſtedfaſt, juſt as we are lanching forth into the Ocean of Eternity: This, this is peculiar to thoſe that are ready. And with what alacrity and pleaſure can ſuch Souls engage in all parts of Religious Worſhip here, who are *ready* for their remove, and fit to be join'd to the general Aſſembly above?

In ſuch a poſture of Soul was He, whoſe Death occaſions this Diſcourſe. I doubt not but he was *actually* as well as *habitually* ready; you know I mean your late Worthy Paſtor Mr. *Hercules Collins*, concerning whom I have need to ſay the leſs, becauſe his *Doctrine* you have heard, and his *Example* you have ſeen for ſo many Years: the former was agreeable to the Sentiments of the Reformed Churches in all Fundamental Articles of Faith, and the latter ſuch as did *adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour*.

He began to be Religious early, and continu'd Faithful to the laſt. He was not ſhock'd by the Fury of Perſecutors, tho he ſuffer'd Impriſonment for the Name of Chriſt.

He was one that had a ſolid Acquaintance with Divine Things, about which he always ſpoke

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ſpoke with a becoming Seriouſneſs and a due Reliſh; and I muſt ſay, I hardly ever knew a Man that did more conſtantly promote Religious Diſcourſe (a Practice almoſt out of faſhion:) he ſhewed an unwearied Endeavour to recover the decayed Power of Religion, for he lived what he preached, and it pleaſed God to ſucceed his Endeavours in the Goſpel after a wonderful manner. Are there not here many that muſt call him Father, whom *he hath begotten thro the Goſpel?* May it not be ſaid of this Man and that Woman, they were born here?

If he had not ſome Mens Accuracy, yet it was made up by a conſtant Flame; for no Man could preach with a more affectionate Regard to the Salvation of Souls. And how well he diſcharged the other Branches of his *Paſtoral Function*, this Church is a Witneſs, whom he has watched over and viſited above five and twenty Years.

He had *Luther*'s three Qualifications for a Goſpel-Miniſter; he was much given to Meditation and Prayer, and hardly any Man was more grievouſly tempted of the Devil than your deceaſed Paſtor: tho for many years Satan in a great meaſure was bruiſed under his Feet, and God had ſo cleared up his Love to his Soul, that he could ſay, *I know in whom I have believed, I know to whom I have committed my Soul, I know that my Redeemer liveth; and I know that when this earthly Houſe of my Tabernacle is diſſolved, I have a Building of God, a Houſe not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.* His conſtant walk was in the *Fear of the Lord, and in the Comforts of the Holy Ghoſt.* He had a *full Aſſurance* of the Love of

of God for many Years; yet this did not make him careleſs and negligent in Duty, it did not lift him up above meaſure, but kept him at the foot of Chriſt.

How exemplary was his Submiſſion under perſonal and relative Trials; his own Indiſpoſitions were frequent and great, *yet in Patience he poſſeſſed his Soul*, and was always learning from the Diſcipline of the Rod: and how well he carried it under the Affliction he had with a near Relation, you cannot but know. I confeſs I have thought him in that reſpect one of the beſt Examples that ever I knew; ſurely no Perſon could be more tender and ſympathizing. In a word, he was faithful in every Relation, a Man of Truth and Integrity, one entirely devoted to the Service of the Temple, and zealouſly bent to promote the Intereſt of the Lord Redeemer. But alas! this uſeful Miniſter is ſilenced, and a few days Indiſpoſition has given him a Remove from the Toils of the Pulpit, to the Triumphs of the Throne.

I confeſs I had not the Opportunity of converſing with him in his laſt Illneſs; but I am informed by thoſe that were with him, that he retained an excellent Savour of Divine Things to the Day of his Death, and did diſcourſe but the Morning before he died after a very moving manner, being greatly affected with thoſe Words, * *They overcame by the Blood of the Lamb.* 'Tis true, he is fallen in Battel, but he died *more than a Conqueror*; *and having fought the good Fight, and finiſhed his Courſe, and kept the Faith*, he quitted the Body, that he might

* *This was the laſt Text that he preached on, it being on a Funeral Occaſion.*

receive

receive an *unfading Crown of Glory*. But we are left behind unripe for Heaven, and God is teaching us by terrible things in Righteouſneſs. And we ſhall diſcover great Stupidity, if we do not obſerve how God hath broken us with Breach upon Breach*: He hath remov'd both Younger and Elder Miniſters. Therefore on this occaſion ſuffer me to ſpeak a few Words to three ſorts of People, and I have done.

1. To ſurviving Miniſters. I confeſs I am the unworthieſt of your number; and conſidering my Age, and before whom I ſtand, my Words ought to be few. Yet the Senſe I have upon my own Soul concerning the Methods of God's Providence towards us, inclines me to addreſs my ſelf to you, my Fathers, that were in Chriſt before me, and preach'd him before I knew him. Suffer a Son to put you in mind of doing the utmoſt you can for Chriſt while here; for you muſt ſhortly go, and what then ſhall we do to ſtem the Tide of Profaneneſs, and anſwer the Cavils of Scepticks againſt our Holy Religion? O pity, pity the riſing Generation of Young Miniſters: Pray for them, adviſe them, and do all you can to help them in their Work, before you leave them: Be an Example to them, that when you are gather'd to your Fathers, we may ſtand up and plead for your God and Ours. And you, my Brethren, that are younger, let me intreat you to apply your ſelves to cloſe Study and conſtant Prayer, that you may ſhew your ſelves

* *Mr.* Dennis *and Mr.* Tho. Harriſon *both died in the Compaſs of ſix Days in* Auguſt *laſt; and ſince the Preaching of this Sermon Mr.* William Collins *is deceas'd.*

Workmen

Workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

2. To you, my Brethren of this Church, that have lost an Excellent Pastor. In the midst of your Tears look up to Heaven, and *pray to the Lord of the Harvest that he would send forth Labourers into his Harvest.* Mat. 9. 38. Remember the God you pray to can dispense the Spirit in what measures he pleases, and qualify whom he will for the Ministration of the Gospel. But let not that make you defective on your part: You must not expect that Preachers will drop down from Heaven, or spring out of Earth; but due Care must be taken for the incouragement of humble men that have *real Gifts*, and let such be train'd up in *useful Learning*, that they may be able to defend the Truths they preach. Your Pastor's Mouth is stop'd, and cannot speak to you; but this I am sure was the Sense of his Mind. To close this Head, Labour to *keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace:* And tho your Elder is dead, remember your Relation to the Church is not dissolv'd, but you are bound to keep your Places, and to do your utmost to promote the Happiness of this Congregation. The Church is in a state of Widowhood; and I hope you will not forget to sympathize with your Pastor's distressed Widow, to defend her Right, and support her to the last.

Be as speedy as you can in filling up the Place in the Church of Him that is gone: And *may you have a Pastor after God's own Heart.*

3. To you that were the constant Auditors of the deceas'd Minister. 'Tis to be fear'd that many

many of you have not improv'd ſo much as you ought to have done: You are Witneſſes with what Zeal and Fervour, with what Conſtancy and Seriouſneſs he us'd to warn and perſuade you. Tho you have been deaf to his former Preaching, yet liſten to the Voice of this Providence, leſt you continue in your Slumber till you ſleep the Sleep of Death.

You cannot but ſee, unleſs you will cloſe your Eyes, *that this World and the Faſhion of it is paſſing away.* O what a Change will a few Months or Years make in this numerous Aſſembly! Yea, what a ſad Change has little more than a Fortnight made in this Congregation! He that was ſo lately preaching in this Pulpit, is now wrapt in his Shroud, and confin'd to his Coffin; and the Lips that ſo often diſpers'd Knowledg amongſt you, are ſeal'd up till the Reſurrection.

Here's the Body of your late Miniſter; but his Soul is enter'd *into the Joy of his Lord.* O that thoſe of you that would not be perſuaded by him living, might be wrought upon by his Death! for tho he is dead, he yet ſpeaketh; and what doth he ſay both to Miniſters and People, but *Be ye alſo ready, for in ſuch an hour as you think not, the Son of Man cometh?*

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A

Funeral Sermon

Occaſioned by the

DEATH of the Reverend

Mr. *William Collins*,

Late Miniſter of the Goſpel in *London*;

Who died the 30th of *October*, 1702.

Preach'd the 15th of *November* following.

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To the Church of Chriſt lately under the Paſtoral Care of the Deceaſed Mr. *William Collins.*

Beloved in our Lord,

IS not without ſome regret that I permit the following Diſcourſe to come abroad, having ſo lately ventur'd to expoſe my ſelf upon a like occaſion. I ſpeak thus, becauſe I am conſcious of my unfitneſs to write in an Age ſo Critical and Cenſorious. I had much rather that on this Occaſion Days ſhould have ſpoken, *than* Job 32. 7. *one who is ſo vaſtly inferior to the Deceaſed in Grace, Learning and Years. And I have often thought, ſince I preach'd on the Death of your Excellent Paſtor, that a Sermon ſo mean to celebrate the Memory of a Man ſo Great, would be interpreted rather a Slight than a Token of Reſpect. And tho you, my Brethren, have been pleas'd to think favourably of it, yet I fear that Learned Men will hardly*

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hardly forgive me, that I have ventur'd on a Task ſo much above me: However I have this ſatisfaction, that I have done the beſt I could within the ſhort Limits allow'd me; and 'tis deſign'd well, however it ſucceed.

My Brethren,

'Tis under your Umbrage that I expoſe it to Publick View, not that I expect you ſhould anſwer for my Faults; tho this I muſt ſay, 'tis your Fault that you had no better a Sermon: But ſuch as this is, I hope, ſince you caus'd it to be preach'd, and now to be publiſh'd, you will let your Prayers meet mine at the Throne of Grace, that it may be ſerviceable to the true Intereſt of Religion. And if God ſhall bleſs it to any good purpoſe, to Saints or Sinners, I deſire he may have all the Glory; while I have ſo much Honour as to be imploy'd as an Inſtrument in the Divine Hand to promote the common Salvation. I commend you to God, and the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among them that are ſanctified; And ſubſcribe my ſelf,

Your Servant for Jeſus ſake,

JOHN PIGGOTT.

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JOB XIV. 14.

——All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my Change come.

IN this Life we meet with great Exerciſes and Trials, as did the Children of *Iſrael* in the Wilderneſs. God leads us through many Difficulties and Hardſhips to humble and prove us, in order to make us meet for a more happy State.

Eliphaz tells us, That *Man is born to trouble, as the Sparks fly upward, i. e.* naturally. And *Job* in the beginning of this Chapter, of which my Text is a part, aſſures us, That *Man that is born of a Woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.* So that to repine at what is inſeparable from Humanity, (conſider'd as fallen) is in effect to be diſpleas'd that we are Men. And with as much reaſon may we murmur that God did not create us Angels, or that we are not immediately tranſlated to Heaven, without taking a Journey of ſeveral Years from the Womb to the Grave; Heaven being the only Place exempt from Inconveniency and Trouble, where alone is no Sin or Sorrow, Clamour or Pain: But in this lower Region every Day is opening to us a new Scene of Miſery, in which we may behold the Vanity of the World, and

Job 5. 7.

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the Frailty of Human Nature. No part of our time but hath its portion of Care and Trouble aſſign'd to it. *And*, as our Saviour hath told us, *ſufficient to the Day is the Evil thereof.* So that Life and Miſery ſeem only to be ſeveral Names for the ſame thing. I ſpeak of Human Life indefinitely, whether that of a Prince or a Beggar; for thoſe that are rais'd to the higheſt pitch of Honour in this World, meet with many things that occaſion their diſquiet and uneaſineſs, as well as thoſe that ſtand upon lower Ground. Indeed it muſt be own'd, there is a viſible difference betwixt the Righteous and the Wicked *now* in ſome reſpects. Yet the Diſpenſations of Divine Providence are promiſcuouſly adminiſter'd to both. The moſt *Excellent of the Earth* are not exempted from thoſe Diſeaſes and Troubles that lead down to
Ver. 2. the gloomy Shades of the Grave. *Man cometh forth like a Flower, and is cut down; he fleeth alſo as a Shadow, and continueth not.* A very elegant Deſcription of a Man's natural Frailty: *A Flower* quickly grows up and appears beautiful, but as ſuddenly is deſtroy'd by a rude Hand, or blaſted by the Wind, or wither'd by the Sun. *He fleeth as a Shadow, and continueth not:* The Sun is no ſooner ſet, or wrapt in the Mantle of a thick Cloud, but the Shadow doth ſuddenly diſappear and entirely vaniſh; ſo uncer-
Ver. 3. tain and ſo fading is the Life of Man. *And doſt thou open thine Eyes upon ſuch a one, and bringeſt me into judgment with thee? q. d.* Doſt thou ſtrictly obſerve my ways, that thou mayſt find cauſe to puniſh a Creature ſo mean as I am? Am I capable of contending with Heaven, that thou *bringeſt me into judgment with thee? i. e.* Thou haſt rebuk'd me by thy Judgments, and

† tho

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tho I have been conſtrain'd to plead with thee, *yet thy Dread hath made me afraid. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.* The Seed of Believers are polluted, as well as the Children of Infidels: I own (as if he ſhould ſay) that I am originally defil'd; but ſince tis the common Lot of all Men, let my Miſery rather move the Divine Pity, than excite the Rigours of inflexible Juſtice to puniſh me in a peculiar and terrible manner. *Seeing his Days are determin'd, the number of his Months are with thee, thou haſt appointed his Bounds that he cannot paſs; turn from him that he may reſt, till he has accompliſh'd, as a Hireling, his Day: q. d.* Relax and abate the Troubles I groan under, till I have finiſh'd my Courſe, and liv'd out the reſidue of my limited Time. And when that is come, *Man lieth down, and riſeth not till the Heavens be no more; they ſhall not awake, nor be raiſed out of their ſleep.* The *Heavens* ſhall not abſolutely ceaſe to be, but to be as they now are. The Apoſtle *Peter* indeed ſpeaks of the *Heavens paſſing away with a great noiſe*; and aſſures us that they ſhall be *diſſolv'd by Fire*, i. e. they ſhall be wonderfully refin'd. I ſee no reaſon to conclude that their *Subſtance* ſhall be annihilated, tho they may paſs under a conſiderable Change in regard of their *Qualities*; when Man ſhall awake from his mortal Slumber, and ſpring from his Bed of Duſt. Upon which *Job* utters a very pathetick Wiſh; *O that thou wouldſt hide me in the Grave, that thou wouldſt keep me ſecret until thy Wrath be paſt, that thou wouldſt appoint me a ſet time, and remember me!* In which words he deſires that God would either *eaſe* him of his Afflictions, or put an *end* to his Life and them together. In the beginning

Ver. 4. Ver. 5, 6. Ver. 12. 2 Pet. 3. 10. Ver. 12. Pſal. 102. 26, 27. Job 14. 13.

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of the next Verſe, he propoſes a Matter by way of Query, which may carry in it an Affirmation accompanied with Joy; *If a Man die, ſhall he live again?* As if he ſhould ſay, Is it true? Yes I find it is, he ſhall undoubtedly *live again.* Some indeed give the words a quite different turn, and make the Queſtion equivalent to an abſolute Denial: *If a Man die, ſhall he live again?* i. e. (ſay they) he ſhall not, namely in this World. And accordingly they underſtand the Change that *Job* ſpeaks of in the Text, to be no other than the Change of his Condition in this Life, from a low and adverſe, to a flouriſhing and proſperous State. Which Senſe ſeems forc'd and not genuine: For we do not read that God ever reveal'd any ſuch thing to *Job*; and no doubt, if there had been ſuch a Revelation, he would have ſpoken of it to his Friends, which would have repel'd the Force of their Cenſures, and not a little tended to his own Vindication. Moreover, upon the ſuppoſition that *Job* had ſuch a diſcovery concerning the end of his Afflictions, and future Advancement even in this Life, he would not have been ſuch a remarkable Inſtance of Patience. Nor can I think we ſhould have heard from him any Expreſſions inconſiſtent with ſuch a Revelation, as there are ſeveral ſcatter'd through this Book. Finally, This Senſe does not accord with the Context, which ſpeaks plainly of a natural Death, and a proper Reſurrection. I therefore chuſe to underſtand the former part of the Verſe according to the firſt Senſe I mentioned, *viz.* That if a Man died, 'twas certain he ſhould riſe again. But then follows the Text——*All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my Change come.*

There

There are two Senſes in reference to this *Change* mention'd in the Text, which I ſhall diſtinctly conſider and improve. Firſt, Some by *this Change* in the Text, underſtand *that Change* that ſhall be made upon the Body at the *Reſurrection*; and then 'tis as if *Job* ſhould have ſaid, "All the Days that are appointed "for my lying in the Grave, ſhall my Soul wait "in Heaven for the revival of my Body, which "ſhall paſs under a mighty Change at the "Reſurrection of the Juſt." And of this mind are ſome very * Learned and Judicious Interpreters. And if the words are underſtood in this Senſe, then this *waiting* muſt refer to that *Diſpoſition* which is in the Spirits of *juſt Men made perfect*: which Deſire does not in the leaſt create any Uneaſineſs or Impatience, for that would damp their Joys, and interrupt their Felicity; but it is ſuch an *Expectation*, and ſuch a *Waiting*, as conſiſts with the eaſe and pleaſure of an happy Spirit. And certainly 'tis very agreeable to the Rational Nature of this Immortal Subſtance, to wait for the *change* of that Body it was created to inhabit: ſeeing 'tis aſſur'd it ſhall be endow'd with a vaſt acceſſion of new Qualities, when 'tis rais'd from the Dead to be put on a ſecond time.

I ſhall therefore briefly recite a few things with reſpect to the Properties of the raiſed Bodies of the Saints, to ſhew that 'tis rational for a happy Human *Spirit* to wait for ſuch *a Body*.

Firſt, The Bodies of the Saints at the Reſurrection ſhall be *ſpiritual*; ſo ſays the Apoſtle,

* Mercerus *and* Sculterus in Loc. *See alſo Mr.* How's *Bleſſedneſs of the Righteous*, P. 210, 211. *&c.*

It

1 Cor. 15. 44. *It is ſown a natural or* * *animal Body, it is rais'd a ſpiritual Body.* Obſerve, 'tis a *Body* ſtill, 'tis a material Subſtance, only ſublimated or rais'd to a higher degree of *fineneſs*. Our Bodies now *are groſs and ſluggiſh*, and do very much hinder the Aſpirations of our Souls; but hereafter they ſhall be *refin'd from the Dregs of Matter*. I do not mean that they ſhall commence *Spirits*, but that they ſhall be *greatly purified*. There is a vaſt difference betwixt certain Portions of Matter now; for inſtance (as I have elſewhere ſhewn) *betwixt the animal Spirits in the Brain, and the groſſer parts of the Body; betwixt a Lump of Clay, and the refin'd Matter of the Air; betwixt the Earth, and the Sun that ſhines upon it; yet all theſe are material Subſtances*. And if we can diſcover ſo great a difference in material things *now*, we may conclude we ſhall diſcern a much greater *hereafter*, when the Bodies of the Saints ſhall be rais'd and refin'd to that degree, as to anſwer the Deſcription of the Apoſtle, who aſſures us they ſhall be *ſpiritual Bodies*. And this not only on the account of the Improvements that ſhall be made on ſuch Bodies by the acceſſion of new Qualities; but on the account of their being better fitted to ſerve the Spirits that ſhall govern them. Here our Bodies are heavy Weights, and great Incumbrances to our Spirits; but the time is haſtning when the *Noble Machines* ſhall be as ſerviceable to our Souls, as was *Elijah*'s fiery Chariot, which convey'd him into that Preſence where Spirits ſhine with the Beauties of Holineſs, and burn with the Ardours of Divine

* ψυχικὸν.

Love.

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Love. The *natural Groſſneſs* of our Bodies now, is the occaſion of much * *Ignorance and Sin: They are as thick Veils to hinder our proſpect, but at the Reſurrection they'l be as tranſparent Mediums to promote our Knowledg.* They ſhall be fit Vehicles to ſerve our Spirits, and agreeable Helps to our Devotion. That our Contemplations *now* on the Material and Intellectual World, are mightily hinder'd by the groſſneſs of the Organs of our Bodies, is too evident to be deny'd; for when the Eye is aſſiſted by Art (as a † Learned Man remarks) it is let into a new World of Creatures, and an infinite agreeable variety of Motions, Figures, and Contextures, which we can diſcern nothing of by our naked Sight: But this, and much more, after the Reſurrection ſhall be diſcover'd by the naked Eye. O what admirable Traces of Wiſdom and Power ſhall we diſcover in the other World, where God and Saints ſhall reſide! *Here* with what confuſion and diſorder do we both think and reaſon about abſtracted Truths! But *hereafter*, how clear and raviſhing Views ſhall we take of the moſt perplex'd *Phænomena* of Nature, and the deepeſt Myſteries of Grace, when our Bodies ſhall be *elevated* and made *ſpiritual*, as well as the Capacities of our Souls enlarged! To how great a degree they ſhall be rais'd and refin'd, I dare not determine; tho I think 'tis a very probable account which is given by an Ingenious ‖ Man, *viz.* "That our Bo-

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* *See Mr.* Joſeph Stennett's *Sermon at the Funeral of Mr.* Belcher, P. 29, 30, 31, 32. *and alſo P.* 57.

† *Dr.* Tenniſon *now ABp. of* Can. *in his Serm. on* 1 Cor. 15. 53. *Pag.* 14.

‖ *Dr.* Hody's *Reſurrection of the (ſame) Body aſſerted*, Pag. 203.

"dies

" dies in the Reſurrection will continue always " the ſame, without *Perſpiration*, or any other " evacuation. The *Springs* will always have " the ſame *bent*, the *Motions* will all be equal- " ly regular, the ſame continual *Round* of the " ſame pure vigorous Spirits, and the ſame " Blood moving for ever in a brisk but even " Circulation." There will be nothing to rebate their *Vigour*, or ſlacken their *Motion*; their Imploy will not exhauſt their Spirits, and therefore they'l have no need of Recruits:

Rev. 7. 16. *They ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more.*

Secondly, The rais'd Bodies of the Saints

1 Cor. 15. 53. ſhall be *Immortal and Incorruptible*: So the Apoſtle affirms, *For this Corruptible muſt put on Incorruption, and this Mortal muſt put on Immortality.* Our Bodies ſhall be deliver'd from *all Diſeaſes* as well as from *Death* it ſelf; and indeed without this an Immortal Body would not be a very deſirable thing. The unequal Temperature of Human Bodies now, and the jarring Principles that compoſe the feeble Structure, do help forward their Decay and Ruin: But nothing that is troubleſom and uneaſy, ſhall ever infeſt the Bodies of the Saints after they are rais'd from the Dead. They ſhall enjoy an entire freedom from Pains and Diſeaſes; and a compleat deliverance from Corruption and Death: *For when this Corruptible*

1 Cor. 15. 54. *ſhall put on Incorruption, and this Mortal ſhall have put on Immortality; then ſhall be brought to paſs the ſaying that is written, Death is ſwallow'd up in Victory*, or *for* * *ever*; ſo as that it

* Εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα often *ſignifies* for ever, *as* 2 Sam. 2. 26. Job 36. 7. *Nor is the Phraſe us'd in any other Senſe in the* Septuagint. *Vid.* Dr. Whitby. in Loc.

ſhall

ſhall never have any more power over the Bodies of the Saints: which being rais'd incorruptible, and greatly refin'd, ſhall be no more ſubject to Sickneſs or Death, but be as immortal as the Spirits to which they will be united.

The antient Philoſophers in their Writings have aſſerted a great many odd Notions, tho I think none more unaccountable than that which is advanc'd in the *Platonick* Syſtem, *viz.* The Doctrine of the *Reſtitution of the World.* The ſubſtance of which Doctrine is this, *viz.* That in a certain ſpace of time every thing that had been acted in this World ſhould be tranſacted over again; ſo that ſuch as had liv'd and died in Ages paſt, ſhould in Ages to come live again as long in the World as they had before, and then die out of it: and that theſe Changes ſhould run in a Circle for ever. By which kind of vain Philoſophy they would infer Corruption and Mortality after the Reſurrection. But the Chriſtian Inſtitution admits of no Doctrine ſo uncomfortable and abſurd: for our Bleſſed Saviour is very expreſs, when he gives a Return to the captious Enquiry of the *Sadducees* concerning a Woman that had ſeven Husbands, *Whoſe Wife of the ſeven this Woman ſhould be at the Reſurrection?* In anſwer to this, our Lord ſhews them, that they went upon a falſe Principle, and that their Ignorance of the Scripture was the cauſe of their Miſtake. The falſe Principle they went upon, was, that there would be marrying and giving in marriage after the Reſurrection. To which our Saviour anſwers, *But they who ſhall be accounted worthy to obtain that World, and the Reſurrection from the Dead,* Luke 20. 35, 36. *neither*

neither marry nor are given in marriage. And then ſubjoins this ſolid Reaſon, *Neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the Angels.*

Thirdly, After the Reſurrection, the Bodies of the Saints ſhall be *ſtrong*. In this the Apoſtle is alſo expreſs—*It is ſown in Weakneſs,*
1 Cor. 15. 43. *it is rais'd in Power.* How feeble are the Saints now! and how ſmall a matter diſorders the Human Structure! *Man in his beſt Eſtate is altogether Vanity*, in regard of his natural Frailty, as well as his moral Conduct. And we are ſaid, *To have our Foundation in the Duſt, to dwell in Houſes of Clay, and to be cruſh'd before the Moth.* An Hair or a Fly, a little Heat or a little Cold, a noxious Vapour or a contagious Atom, is enough to unpin the Fabrick, and throw down the Tabernacle we dwell in: But when this ſhall be rais'd and rebuilt, it ſhall be ſo ſtrong, as not to ſuffer by ſmaller Accidents, or a greater Force; its Strength ſhall be ſo advanc'd, that its ſwifteſt Motion ſhall be without wearineſs, and *its Life*, as durable as *Eternity*, ſhall not draw upon it the leaſt decay: We ſhall then be like the Angels, whoſe Property 'tis to *excel in ſtrength.*

Fourthly, The Bodies of the Saints at the Reſurrection ſhall be *Celeſtial* and *Glorious*. Of both theſe Epithets the Apoſtle ſpeaks: *And*
1 Cor. 15. 49. *as we have born the Image of the Earthly, we ſhall alſo bear the Image of the Heavenly.* It's call'd a Heavenly Body, from the place of its abode: a Place ſo pleaſant, that the Inhabitants of it, the ſinleſs Angels, cannot deſcribe it in its utmoſt Beauty and Glory: How low then

then must be our Conceptions of it, while confin'd to this dark and misty Region! Yet the Holy Scriptures say as much concerning that, and the Glory of the rais'd Bodies of the Saints, as is necessary and convenient for us to know.

What Spectacles of Horror are the dead Bodies of the Saints, when laid in the Dust! But when God shall raise them from those Beds, that *Corruption* with which they lie down shall put on *Incorruption*; so that they shall appear with a great Lustre and Glory upon them. For tho the Body is *sown in Dishonour, it shall be rais'd in Glory.* How deform'd soever some Men are when they die, yet all the Saints shall be rais'd without any thing defective or redundant. Such as descend into the Grave, crooked, maim'd, or blind, shall come forth streight in admirable Proportion, with Eyes sparkling like Flames. Those that have sunk into the Earth with Wrinkles and Furrows, the Marks of Old Age, shall spring from thence with a sprightliness of Youth, set off with a lively Colour, and a heavenly Air. The Bodies of the Saints at the Resurrection shall have so great a Lustre and Beauty upon them, as shall excel the most celebrated Beauties in this World. The Children of the Resurrection will be without any Spot or Wrinkle on their Bodies, as well as without any Stain upon their Souls. Ver. 43.

No doubt but *Adam*, while innocent, was a very glorious Creature; and therefore an excellent Author is of opinion, That the Bodies of the Saints, after the Resurrection, shall be just as *Adam*'s was before his Fall; only with this Advantage above it, that they shall neither Dr. Hody.

neither need Recruits nor Evacuations. But with ſubmiſſion to that learned Gentleman, I cannot but think that the rais'd Bodies of the Saints will in other reſpects excel *Adam*'s in Innocency; becauſe I find 'tis not *Adam*'s Body before his Fall, but the Body of our Bleſſed Saviour ſince 'twas rais'd and glorify'd, that is made the Model and Pattern by which ours is to be form'd: For the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of
Phil. 3. 21. our Lord, ſays, *Who ſhall change our vile Body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious Body*, &c. Now concerning the *glorious Body* of our Bleſſed Saviour, we may give ſome faint gueſſes at it from the Luſtre of his Countenance, and the Glittering of his Garments, when transfigur'd in Mount *Tabor*, before *Peter*, *James*, and *John*. One Evangeliſt
Mat. 17. 2. ſays,—*His Face did ſhine as the Sun, and his Raiment was white as the Light*. Another ſays,
Luke 9. 29. *That as he pray'd, the Faſhion of his Countenance was alter'd, and his Raiment was white and gliſtering: His Face did ſhine as the Sun.* No Creature in this World has ſo viſible a Glory as the Sun, and therefore the Glory of Chriſt's Countenance is compar'd to it; not but that it might much excel it, and for ought I know, all the Beams of Light that iſſue from that Globe of Fire, do greatly fall ſhort of the Luſtre of our Saviour's transfigur'd Countenance: And I the rather think thus, becauſe the Luſtre that was on the other parts of our Saviour's Body, tho cover'd with Garments, ſeem to have ſhot pointed Rays of Glory upon the Garments, which made them appear like *Light, white and gliſtering*. And all this ſeems to be but a Preludium to the greater Glory our Lord was to put on after his Reſurrection.

And

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And if his Body was ſo glorious when it was but a mortal Body, what Beauty, what Luſtre, what Exceſs of Glory does it ſhine with, now 'tis a ſpiritual, impaſſible, immortal Body! And what Excellencies ſhall the Bodies of the Saints ſhare, when form'd after this bright Pattern at the Reſurrection! But,

Again, how far the glorify'd Spirit may tend to advance the Luſtre of the rais'd Body, I cannot tell: for we may obſerve now, that according to the Serenity of the Mind, is the Vivacity of the Countenance. The Peace and Satisfaction which reign'd in *Stephen*'s Breaſt, might be one reaſon of that Seraphick Air that appear'd in his Countenance a little before his Martyrdom; tho I deny not but there might be ſomething extraordinary in this Martyr's Caſe. But add to all this, that at the Reſurrection, the finiſhing Strokes ſhall be given to the Spouſe of Chriſt, that his Bride ſhall then be ſet off with the brighteſt Ornaments, and the moſt glittering Attire; that the Marriage of the Lamb being come, the Spouſe ſhall be without Spot or Wrinkle, in all reſpects prepar'd to conſummate the happy Nuptials.

Thus have I faintly deſcrib'd the rais'd glorify'd Bodies of the Saints; but alas! the half has not been told you, all Images are too dark, all Colours are too dead, all Words too narrow, and all Thoughts too low, fully to delineate a Glorify'd Body. Yet the little, the very little that I have ſaid, being laid together, may ſhow the Reaſonableneſs of a Spirit's waiting in Heaven with Delight and Pleaſure, till that vile Body it dropt at its Aſcenſion thither, be rais'd and faſhion'd like the glorious Body of our Bleſſed Saviour. Before I

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paſs to the ſecond Senſe that is given of the *Change* mention'd in my Text, I ſhall briefly name two or three Inferences from what has been ſaid.

(1.) The Spirits of Juſt Men in Heaven are not *now* ſo perfect as they ſhall be *hereafter* at the firſt *Reſurrection.* That the Spirits of Juſt Men departed are *perfect* in a comparative Senſe, cannot be *deny'd*; but that they ſhall be rais'd to a *higher degree of Perfection*, muſt be neceſſarily *granted:* for 'tis certain they were created to *dwell in Fleſh*; and 'tis as certain they are not ſo happy, while *naked Spirits*, as they will be when *re-united* to their rais'd Glorified Bodies. So that when the Author to the *Hebrews* ſpeaks of *the Spirits of Juſt Men made perfect*, it muſt be underſtood with ſome limitation; for while they wait for a Good which they *do not enjoy*, they are not ſo perfect as they will be when that *is obtain'd.* 'Tis true, ſuch Spirits have finiſh'd the Work which God gave them to do in this World, before they were remov'd to the other. They are perfectly deliver'd from all Trouble and Sorrow, all Sin, and Temptations to it; they are enter'd into the Poſſeſſion of the Heavenly Inheritance; in the Injoyment of which they ſhine with a Perfection of Knowledg, Holineſs, and Love: *They know as they are known*, they love as they are lov'd, and they *are holy as God is holy.* Which *ſubjective moral Perfection* does not exclude, but ſuppoſe that they poſſeſs ſuch a *natural Perfection* as is proper to glorify'd Human Spirits while uncloth'd: for we muſt always keep in mind, that God originally deſign'd they ſhould *dwell in Fleſh*; and conſequently they are not ſo perfect as they will be

Heb. 12. 23.

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he when their Bodies are rais'd, refin'd, and glorify'd, in conjunction with thoſe Spirits they did formerly inhabit.

(2.) If the Bodies of the Saints ſhall have ſuch an acceſſion of new Qualities when rais'd from the Dead, how careful ſhould we be of ſuch Bodies before they die? I mean, that they may not be abus'd to any vile purpoſes. If we are Believers, our Bodies are *the Temples of the Holy Ghoſt*; and we live in the expectation, that theſe *very Bodies* that are ſo often ſick and indiſpos'd, preſs'd with natural Neceſſities, and by a variety of Accidents render'd weak and infirm, ſhall be rais'd incorruptible and immortal. Do we live under the Influence of ſuch a Hope? Have we ſuch glorious things in view? Surely this will reſtrain us from uſing any of the Members of our Bodies, as Inſtruments of Unrighteouſneſs unto Sin. This is an Inference made by the Apoſtle *John* himſelf from a like Propoſition: for when he had ſpoken concerning the Objects of the Chriſtian Hope, with reſpect to our *likeneſs to Chriſt*, and our *ſeeing of him as he is*; 1 John 3. 2, 3. he adds, *And every Man that hath this Hope in him, purifieth himſelf even as he is pure.* Indeed thoſe that expect *hereafter* a *Mahometan* Paradiſe of ſenſual Pleaſures, may *now*, without any contradiction to their Hopes, indulge and gratify their carnal Appetites. But it would be a very monſtrous and abſurd thing for one, that expects his Body at the Reſurrection, to be faſhion'd like the Glorious Body of his Saviour, to give up all the Members of it to be conſtantly employ'd in the Service of Sin.

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(3.) How ſhould the Hopes of a Glorious Reſurrection *hereafter*, ſupport and comfort us *now* under the Infirmities of a mortal Body! There is hardly any thing in this World that gives us more uneaſineſs and trouble than our frail and infirm Bodies; what with the Diſeaſes that attend them, and the Clogs they are to our Souls, Chriſtians generally *groan, being burden'd:* But the time is coming when we ſhall know no more Sickneſs nor Pain, when we ſhall neither feel Diſeaſes, nor fear Death; all Complaints ſhall be ſilenc'd, and *all Tears be wiped from our Eyes.* Therefore let ſuch as have flouriſhing Souls in languiſhing Bodies, ſuſtain themſelves with this thought, that tho they drop into the Grave through Weakneſs, yet they ſhall be rais'd by Infinite Power, and be endow'd with ſuch a Beauty and Strength as ſhall neither change nor decay, but both exiſt and continue for ever. The Apoſtle *Paul*, after he had told the *Theſſalo-*
1 Theſſ. 4. 16. *nian* Chriſtians, that our *Lord himſelf ſhould deſcend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God*; that *the Dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt*;
Ver. 18. adds, *Wherefore comfort one another with theſe words.*

(4.) If the Spirits of the Juſt in Heaven wait with pleaſure for the Reſurrection of their Bodies, then the Spirits of the Wicked *now* in Priſon expect with terror the Reſur-
John 5. 28, 29. rection of theirs. *All that are in their Graves,* our Saviour aſſures us, *ſhall come forth: They that have done Good to the Reſurrection of Life, and they that have done Evil to the Reſurrection of Damnation.* With what new Qualities the Bodies of the Wicked ſhall riſe, I'll not determine,

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termine, becauſe the Scripture is ſilent in the matter: This I may venture to affirm, that they'l be ſo fram'd as to undergo what ſhall be allotted them to ſuffer; as for their being Immortal, 'tis that they may exiſt under the greateſt and moſt exquiſite Torments. So that the departed Spirits of the Wicked muſt needs tremble, while they expect the Reſurrection of their vile Bodies to be rejoin'd to their guilty Souls, which together ſhall *ſuffer ſhame and everlaſting contempt.*

There are other Inferences which might be deduc'd, but I forbear, and ſhall now proceed to conſider the ſecond Senſe which Interpreters give of the *Change* mention'd in the Text; and that is, *the Change we paſs under at Death.* Underſtanding the words thus, as they repreſent the pious *Diſpoſition*, and the firm *Reſolution* of *Job*, with reference to his own Death; 'tis neceſſary that I briefly touch on theſe four things.

Firſt, That I treat of *Death* under the Notion of a *Change.*

Secondly, That I conſider this Change, as appointed or predetermin'd.

Thirdly, That I tell you what is imply'd, *in a Perſon's waiting for the appointed time of his Change.*

Fourthly, The Uſe and Improvement of the whole.

Firſt, I am to treat of *Death* under the Notion of a *Change.* And the Text confines me to ſpeak concerning this *Change* as it reſpects a *good Man*; tho' there are ſome things that are common both to the Righteous and the

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Wicked in this *great Change*, which will unavoidably fall in: Yet I ſhall principally inſiſt on this *Change* as it refers to the Righteous. And,

(1.) Death diſſolves the cloſe Union that Heaven hath ſtruck betwixt Soul and Body. Indeed, the *Modus* of this Union will remain a puzzling Enquiry, even among Men of the deepeſt penetration: but this we know in regard of its Effects, 'Tis a Union ſo cloſe and near, that the Spirit cannot grieve without affecting the Body, nor the Body receive a Wound, without occaſioning a painful Senſation in the Mind. Yet Death parts theſe near Aſſociates, and fixes 'em a great diſtance one from the other. The Fabrick of the Body ſhall moulder into Duſt, and the Spirit that animated it ſhall be recall'd by him that *form'd it.* *Then ſhall the Duſt return to the Earth, as it was, and the Spirit unto God that gave it.* Now the beſt of Men cannot paſs under this Change without ſome natural Reluctancy. The Apoſtle *Paul*, who had *a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt*, ſignified, that he was not *deſirous to be uncloth'd*, *i. e.* to die merely that he might put off his Body, and be rid of one conſtituent part of himſelf; but that he might be *clothed upon*, that is, that he might have immediate Glory and Bliſs, in regard of his Soul, and that hereafter his Body might be glorified in conjunction with his happy Spirit. Thus you ſee Death makes a great Change, but 'tis the way to Immortality; and tho it parts theſe dear Intimates, yet the Righteous are not thereby remov'd from their Happineſs, but rais'd to a better enjoyment

Eccl. 12. 7.

Phil. 1. 23.

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enjoyment of it, as the following Particulars will more fully demonſtrate.

(2.) Death changes the *Place and Abode* of a good Man. The Body that *walk'd* upon this Earth, is *buried* under *it*, and fix'd in the common Repoſitory of the Dead: the Soul that us'd to be aſpiring after Communion with God, is immediatly caught up to Heaven with him. Here the Spirit of a good Man ſojourns in a frail Tabernacle, but at Death it ſhall be received into Everlaſting Habitations: So that in regard of his Soul, he exchanges Earth for Heaven; in reſpect of his Body, he parts with a Dwelling for a Coffin, his Ornaments for a Shroud, and his eaſy Bed for a dark and ſilent Grave. Indeed, there are but a few Souls that have ground to hope for the *former*, therefore the generality of Men dread the *latter*.

(3.) As conſequent hereupon, the Righteous at Death change their Society, and that much for the better. In this World, the Children of God are conſtrain'd to converſe with the Heirs of Hell. Now as theſe two Off-ſprings have different Parents and different Intereſts, ſo they have vaſtly different Inclinations; which muſt make their converſing together very diſagreeable, and occaſion much trouble and ſorrow to the Righteous. But Death, which lets 'em out of this World, will let them into another, where they ſhall have Society more harmonious and ſutable. Here the beſt Men have their Imperfections; and tho they are Children of the ſame Father, Diſciples of the ſame Lord, Heirs of the ſame Kingdom, and are travelling under the Influence of the ſame Spirit to the ſame Ce-

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leſtial Country, yet they are too apt *to fall out by the way.* So that ſometimes the Converſation of good Men proves a Scandal and Grief to one another; but ſo ſoon as they are abſent from their Bodies, and preſent with the Lord, they ſhall enjoy the moſt ſweet and endearing Society. Death lets 'em out of Priſon into Paradiſe; they leave the *Communion of Saints* on Earth, to join with the General Aſſembly and Church of the Firſt-born written in Heaven, where they ſhall not only aſſociate with the Spirits of Juſt Men conſummated, and with an innumerable Company of Angels; but that which is beſt of all, they ſhall be preſent with Jeſus the Mediator of the new Covenant, who has endear'd himſelf to 'em by his indefective Obedience, unparallel'd Sufferings, by his juſtifying Blood, and renewing Spirit, through which they obtain'd a rightful Claim to the Glory of Heaven, and were render'd meet for Converſe with that Society to which they are advanc'd. O happy Change! to paſs from a peeviſh ill-natur'd World, into that Bleſſed Place where there is *Fulneſs of Joy, and Pleaſures for evermore!* Where * "there's neither Pride nor "Envy, Jealouſy nor Strife, Weakneſs nor "Folly, to render them uneaſy to themſelves, "or each other: they are like flaming Ta- "pers in a Branch of burniſh'd Gold, which "ſo mingle their ſeveral Lights, that at "a diſtance they ſeem to be but one, tho "indeed they are many." O thrice happy Change! to be rais'd to ſuch bleſſed and a-

* *Mr.* Nathanael Taylor's *Sermon on* 2 Cor. 5. 8. *Pag.* 11.

greeable

greeable Society, where there is not a Sigh heard, a Tear dropt, nor a Complaint utter'd, but all the Signs of Sorrow are utterly baniſh'd: For as the Inhabitants of Heaven live in unſtained Light, ſo they dwell in perfect Love; and while they mingle their Hallelujahs, which they offer to him that ſits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever, there is not the leaſt Diſcord, but the trueſt and moſt perfect Harmony.

(4.) As there is a *Change of Society* conſequent on Death, ſo there will follow a *Change of Work and Employment.* While we carry about us an enſnaring mortal Body, we muſt watch and pray, combat and fight; but at Death *our Warfare ſhall be accompliſh'd.* We ſhall have run our Race, finiſh'd our Courſe, and fought the good Fight: and tho we die *ſtruggling* with the Enemies of our Salvation, we ſhall die *victorious*; for every true Saint dies *more than a Conqueror through him that hath loved him.*

Here we are forced to be conſtantly on our *guard*, and often to be actually *engag'd* with Principalities and Powers; but when our Bodies *drop* into the Earth, and our Souls *aſcend* to Heaven, we ſhall enter into Manſions too high for the Storms of this Region, and too ſtrong for the Attacks of Devils. Now, I ſay, as we ſhall change our Place and Society, ſo we ſhall our Work and Employment; for no Change can free us from the Duty we owe to our God. That we ſhall perform Duties in Heaven, is beyond all doubt; 'tis irrational to think that Angels and Men ſhould dream away Eternal Ages in doing nothing. Indeed, the extent of our Miniſtration in Heaven, I mean

mean the whole of what we ſhall do, and enjoy in the inviſible World, we muſt be content to be ignorant of, till we have paſs'd out of Time into Eternity. This we know in general, there will be no need of Goſpel-Ordinances, nor of the exerciſe of Suffering Graces; but we ſhall love God, and admire him, adore and praiſe him, know him, and be like him, and unweariedly contemplate his Glory with new Extaſy, and Eternal Wonder. In a word, we ſhall be deliver'd from all Moral and Penal Evils, and be advanc'd to the higheſt Happineſs and Glory, a Happineſs that ſhall be as durable as the Author of it. Finally, this Happineſs ſhall immediately enſue upon the Change we paſs under at Death. That a Spirit uncloth'd of its Body, is capable of acting in a ſeparate State, none can deny that own the Immortality of the Soul. Moreover, a good Man's Soul is as fit for Heaven *in articulo Mortis*, as ever it will be. There is no refining Fire to purify departed Spirits: The Popiſh Purgatory is an abſurd and viſionary thing, reflecting great Diſhonour upon the Sacrifice of Chriſt; however it may promote the ſecular Intereſt of the Prieſts. Again, Chriſt hath made every thing ready to receive all that *die in the Lord*; and there are many places of Scripture that either plainly expreſs it, or from which it may be clearly infer'd. One that plainly expreſſes it, is our Saviour's Pro-
Luke 23.43. miſe to the Thief on the Croſs; *And Jeſus ſaid unto him, Verily, I ſay unto thee, to day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.* And another from which it may be ſtrongly infer'd, is that of the Apoſtle *Paul*; *For I am in a*

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ſtrait betwixt two, having a deſire to depart and to be with Chriſt, which is far better. Now if the Apoſtle, who liv'd a Life of Communion with God here, had not expected upon his Death preſently to have paſs'd into the bliſsful Preſence of his Lord, we cannot rationally think he would have been in any ſtrait, to have fix'd his Choice; for certainly a little enjoyment of God here, is far better than no enjoyment at all; for none there can be if the Soul falls into a deep Sleep, and paſſes into an unactive State. But this Notion I have elſewhere confuted, and therefore ſhall haſten to the ſecond General Head; which is, Phil. 1. 23.

Secondly, To ſhew you that the time of our Change by Death is appointed or predetermined; about which it will be neceſſary briefly to ſtate the Matter, and then to prove it. I ſhall explain it by theſe three Propoſitions, to prevent Miſtakes.

(1.) No Man's Days are ſo determin'd, as to juſtify the neglect of Prayer, or the diſuſe of Food or Phyſick. He that has fix'd in his own Counſel how long we ſhall live, has determin'd that ordinarily Food ſhall ſupport our Lives, and Medicines correct thoſe Maladies that infeſt our Bodies.

The Word of God directs us in a time of Sickneſs and Danger to look up to Heaven; for tho he already knows what we want, yet he will ſtill be enquir'd of by us for all we need. And indeed under all our Illneſs and Indiſpoſition of Body, we are principally and in the firſt place to ſeek to God, and then we may lawfully addreſs to Phyſicians. *Aſa* might very innocently have *ſought to the Phyſicians*; there- 2 Chron. 16. 12.

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therefore his Sin did not lie in a bare Application to them, but in his ſeeking to the Phyſicians, and *not to God*. And this gives me a fair occaſion to reprove the madneſs, and cenſure the folly of ſome Pretenders to Religion, who ſeldom concern themſelves about their Souls, till the Phyſicians have given over their Bodies as paſt cure; the Miniſter is the laſt Perſon that is thought of, tho he has more to do with the Sick than any of the *great Maſters of the other Faculty*. Yet alas! the ſick Perſon muſt be ſtupified with Opiats, and brought into the very Agonies of Death, before we can have an opportunity of ſpeaking to him, or praying with him.

(2.) The Days of wicked Men, through Intemperance and other Vices, are much ſhorter than in human probability they might have been according to the courſe of Nature.
Prov. 10.27. The wiſeſt of Men has told us, that *the Fear of the Lord prolongeth Days; but the Years of the Wicked ſhall be ſhortned*. A Man that is meek and temperate, prevents many Diſeaſes, that overtake him who gives up himſelf to Paſſion, and runs into all exceſs of Riot. *Solomon* ſpeaking of *the Fear of God, or Religion*,
Prov. 3.8. ſays, *It ſhall be Health to thy Navel, and Marrow to thy Bones*. Theſe words are not to be underſtood, as if Religion would maintain ſuch as embrace it in a conſtant ſtate of Health: No, but that the Virtues it recommends are proper to promote Health, and to prevent Diſeaſes. For nothing is more evident, than that ſome, thro their Exceſſes, corrupt the Maſs of their Blood, and bring Rottenneſs into their Bones, by which means they live leſs time than might have been expec-

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ted according to the course of Nature. 'Tis plain that some *die in Youth*, because *their Life is among the Unclean.* Job 36. 14.

(3.) Tho God has fix'd the Period of Human Life, yet it is not so determin'd as to lay any Person under a fatal necessity of Self-murder, or the commission of any other Sin that may hasten his Death. What Christ himself suffer'd, was according *to the determinate Counsel and Foreknowledg of God:* Yet that did not fix either *Judas* that betray'd him, or the *Jews* that crucified him, under such a fatal necessity of committing those Facts, as to force the Faculties of their Souls: to suppose which, would be at once to render them *innocent*, and to make God the *Author of their Sin*; a Consequence not less blasphemous, than the Principle is absurd from which it is infer'd. So in the Case before us, tho God has fix'd the Period of Human Life, yet not so as to constrain any one to put an end to his own Days: if any Man forfeit his Life to publick Justice, and so his Days are *cut off in the midst*, the Sins that brought him to his shameful Exit are not to be charg'd on the Divine Decrees, but on the Corruption and Obstinacy of his own Will.

Having thus stated the Matter, I shall endeavour to prove that God hath *predetermin'd, and fix'd the Period of Human Life.* I am well aware that I am fallen on a very nice and disputable Point, but my Time will not allow me to wade into the Controversy; I shall therefore undertake, in a very few words, to establish the Principle which I think is advanc'd in the Text (understanding the Change mention'd in it of Death) by other parts of Divine Revelation.

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The Holy Scriptures aſſure us, *That to every*
Eccl. 3. 1. *thing there is a Seaſon, and a Time to every Purpoſe under Heaven*; *i. e.* a Time fix'd in the Divine Decrees: and 'tis preſently ſubjoin'd, *A*
Ver. 2. *Time to be born, and a Time to die.* Moreover, if God hath predetermin'd things of leſſer moment, it ſeems rational to conclude that things of greater importance come within the compaſs of his Decrees. The Apoſtle *Paul*, in his Oration to the *Athenians*, affirms, that God
Acts 17. 26. hath *determin'd*, not only *the Times before appointed*, but fix'd the *Bounds of Mens Habitations*. If the Places of our Dwellings are predetermin'd, much more the Period of our Lives.

Again, it muſt be allow'd that the Time of our Bleſſed Saviour's *Death*, as well as of his *Nativity*, was predetermin'd in the Eternal Counſel of God: For as he came into the World in the Fulneſs of Time, ſo he went not out of it till that Time was fully come which the Father had determin'd he ſhould continue here: Therefore 'tis ſaid of his Enemies, that tho *they ſought to take him, yet no Man*
Joh. 7. 30. *laid hands on him* (they were reſtrain'd) *becauſe his Hour was not yet come.* Now Jeſus Chriſt was made like to us in all things, Sin only excepted; ſo that I think it not unreaſonable to conclude, that the Day of our Death is predetermin'd, as well as that of our Saviour's.

There are ſeveral other Mediums that Learned Men go upon in this Controverſy, which I ſhall not ſo much as name; I have time only to refer you to two ample Teſtimonies of Scripture, which I think will both elucidate and
Job 7. 1. confirm the matter: *Is there not an appointed time to Man upon Earth? Are not his Days alſo like the Days of an Hireling?* Both of theſe Queſtions

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Queſtions carry in them a ſtrong Affirmation: *Is there not an appointed Time to Man upon Earth? q. d.* Yes, there certainly is, God hath fix'd and appointed ſuch a Space of Time for his continuance in this World. *Are not his Days alſo like the Days of an Hireling? i. e.* they certainly are. And this further illuſtrates and confirms the Matter: A Hireling hath a Time of Service prefix'd, which when expir'd, he is diſcharg'd from his Labour: So Man having liv'd to the Period Heaven has fix'd, can continue in this World no longer; as another Paſſage in the Book of *Job* does expreſly affirm: *Seeing his Days are determin'd*, and *the Number of his Months are with thee; thou haſt appointed his Bounds that he cannot paſs.* But I haſten, Job 14. 5.

Thirdly, To tell you, what is imply'd in a good Man's waiting for the *appointed Time of his Change.*

1. It ſuppoſes and implies an Apprehenſion and Perſuaſion, that the Change he expects will be for his Advantage. It may be ſaid of a threaten'd Miſery, that People rather *fear* its approach, than *wait* for its coming; Waiting is an Act of Hope, and the proper Object of Hope is an abſent Good. *Hope that is ſeen, is not Hope; for what a Man ſeeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for what we ſee not, then do we with patience wait for it.* Evil conſider'd as future and approaching, is the Object of Fear; but being preſent, it's the Occaſion of Sorrow. But what we are ſaid to hope and wait for, we apprehend as good: So that ſuch as wait for their great Change aright, look on Death as a Friend, and not as an Enemy. The Wicked rather *fear* than *wait* for their Change; Rom. 8. 24, 25.

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Change; they think of Death under the Notion of a King of Terrors, but the Righteous wait for it as a Meſſenger of Peace: and the reaſon of both is obvious, for the former at Death quit their imaginary Happineſs for real Miſery, whereas the latter have good ground to believe they ſhall paſs from an imperfect, to the moſt deſirable and compleat enjoyment of God.

2. This Waiting implies a profound Submiſſion to the Will of God, both with reſpect to the fixed Time of his Change, and the Things that lead to it.

(1.) This waiting for our Change, implies a profound Submiſſion to the Will of God, in regard of that Time he has fix'd for it. We may all ſay with *Iſaac*, *We know not the Day of our Death*; yet if we wait for our Change aright, we are content to depart this Life at the time that Heaven hath appointed, be it ſooner or later. O, ſays ſuch a Soul, He that is the Lord of all my Time, has a Right to contract or lengthen it; He that breath'd into me the Breath of Life, may ſtop it when he pleaſes, and call back that Spirit which he firſt gave. I am content with God's predetermining the Time of my Exit, becauſe he is infinitely wiſe, and can beſt order the Seaſon of my Removal out of this World, who fix'd the Moment of my coming into it.

(2.) This waiting for our Change, implies a Submiſſion to the Will of God, in bearing thoſe Afflictions he ſhall think fit to lay upon us in the way to it. There are a great many Difficulties which moſt good Men ſtruggle through, before they arrive at that Place, *where the Wicked ceaſe from troubling, and the Weary are at reſt.* Beſides the Cares and Diſappoint-

appointments of this Life, beſides the Treachery of pretended Friends, and the Malice of open Enemies; there are Hoſts of Diſeaſes that our Bodies are incident to, ſome loathſome, and others painful, that try the Graces of good Men to the utmoſt; ſo that e'er they are aware, they ſlide into Fits of Impatience: but the Grace of God, that has the aſcendent in their Souls, ſoon corrects their Diſorders, and ſilences their Complaints; and then, like the Holy Pſalmiſt in his Afflictions, *they are dumb, and open not their mouths, becauſe God does it.* For being ſatisfied with God's appointing the time of their Death, they are alſo willing to undergo thoſe intermediate Evils which he ſees fit to bring upon them, *to weaken their ſtrength in the way,* till they ſink down into the Duſt of Death. And they endure Chaſtiſement as Children, they are neither ſtupid nor impatient, they do not *deſpiſe the chaſtening of the Lord, nor faint when they are rebuk'd of him.*

(3.) Waiting for our Change, implies a making of frequent and ſerious Reflections on the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of our Time. He that waits aright for his great Change, frequently conſiders how ſwiftly his Time paſſes, and how ſoon there will be a Period put to it: That he is not to continue long in this World, but is haſtening to the other. 'Tis remarkable, that tho *Jacob* had liv'd 130 Years, when he ſtood before *Pharaoh*, yet he lets him know, that *the days of the years of his Life were* but *few*, as well as *evil.* But alas, how much is Human Life ſhorten'd ſince that time! I obſerve, that *Job* in the Text reſolves to *wait all the Days of his appointed Time:* He does not ſpeak of Weeks, or Months, or Years, but of

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Days, certainly to denote the brevity of Human Life. The Apoſtle *James* compares our
Jam. 4. 14. Life to *a Vapour, which appeareth for a little time, and then vaniſheth away.* A Vapour is a fit Repreſentation of the Life of Man, for the ſhortneſs of its continuance, and the ſuddenneſs of its departure. Now he that waits for his Change aright, lives every day as if it were to be his laſt: I know, ſays ſuch a Divine Soul, *the Time is ſhort*, and it will not be long before the Angel ſhall ſwear by Him that lives for ever and ever, that Time ſhall be no more; and ſince my Time is ſo ſhort and uncertain, I will demean my ſelf like a *Stranger* upon Earth, and as a *Citizen* of Heaven, and will conſtantly beg, *That God would ſo teach me to number my Days, that I may apply my Heart to Wiſdom.*

(4.) Waiting for our *great Change*, implies the exerciſe of the utmoſt Diligence to be *actually* prepar'd for it. Every true Saint is *habitually* ready for Death, but there are but a very few that are *actually* prepar'd: all that are brought into a State of Reconciliation with God, and united to Chriſt, that are juſtified by his Blood, and renew'd by his Spirit, are *habitually* fit to die; but an *actual* Preparation for Death, ſuch as the Apoſtle *Paul* had, when in ſo great a degree he was crucified to this World, and the World to him, that he could ſay, *He was willing rather to be abſent from the Body, and preſent with the Lord*, but very few enjoy: however ſuch an excellent Temper is labour'd after by all ſuch as wait aright for their great Change. I proceed now to the Improvement of the whole.

(1.) I infer, That God never deſign'd this *changing World* for our *Eternal Abode.* Here we

we have no continuing City, the Faſhion of this World is paſſing away; this can't be the Center of our Reſt, becauſe there is nothing in it to ſatisfy the boundleſs Cravings of an Immortal Spirit. We ſhould not be in a waiting poſture, if we had *Hope only in this Life:* but, bleſſed be God, we that are Chriſtians have ſolid ground to expect a better and a more durable State! This Life inſenſibly glides away like a rapid Stream, and it will not be long e'er the time of *waiting* for our Change by Death ſhall be over; and tho after this we ſhall expect with pleaſure the Reſurrection of our Bodies, yet in the intermediate Space we ſhall enjoy ſuch refin'd Delights as ſhall give us, not only a juſt Idea of that State we were originally deſign'd for by the Author of our Beings, but an experimental Reliſh of the Pleaſures belonging to it.

(2.) How ſtupid and criminal are ſuch, who inſtead of daily expecting their *great Change*, baniſh all ſerious Thoughts of Death from their Minds! *who put the evil Day far from them*, and cannot tell how to think of the Horror and Silence of the Grave, that they muſt be buried out of ſight, and lie in a Bed of Stench and Rottenneſs. I confeſs, if the thruſting theſe Thoughts from your Minds would prevent *this Change*, there would be ſome ſhew of Reaſon in what you do: But alas, whether you think of Death or not, it is making haſty Advances towards you; therefore be prevail'd with to give your ſelves the liberty of a few ſerious Thoughts about this matter. Will your Change be the better, or the eaſier to come, if unlook'd for? No ſurely, but much the worſe; for then it will overtake you while

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you are unprovided for it: And what will be the Conſequence of that? Why, immediately after your falling by the *firſt Death*, you'l ſink down under the Power of the *ſecond Death*. You'l not only be *ſwallowed up* in the Heart of the Earth, but *drop into* a Lake of Fire. O, be no longer unconcern'd about your *great Change*, but familiarize the Thoughts of Death, and reſolve with *Job* in the Text, *To wait all the Days of your appointed Time till your Change come.*

(3.) If the Inhabitants of this lower World have reaſon to expect ſuch a Change as you have heard, then none of them are fit Objects of our Truſt. Thoſe that ſhare the greateſt Honours both in Church and State, are as frail as Perſons in the moſt abject condition. Therefore, *Ceaſe ye from Man whoſe Breath is in his Noſtrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Don't place a mighty Confidence in your Rich and Potent Friends; for if they ſhould not alter in their Reſpects to you, yet this Change of Death may overtake them, before they have done you the Service you expected from them. *Put not your truſt in Princes, nor in the Son of Man, in whom there is no help; his Breath goeth forth, he returneth to his Earth, in that very day his Thoughts periſh.* But make ſure of an Intereſt in an unchangeable God, a God that abideth the ſame, *of whoſe Years there is no end*; a God, whoſe Love is, like himſelf, Unchangeable and Everlaſting.

Iſa. 2. 22.

Pſal. 146. 3, 4.

(4.) If God has predetermin'd the Period of Human Life, then we ought not to be anxiouſly deſirous to die before the Time that He has fix'd. I know that ſome good Men, under great Afflictions, have *choſe Strangling, and*

Job 7. 15.

Death

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Death rather than Life: **And with great impatience have wiſh'd for the Hour of their departure** out of this miſerable World. But this was their Infirmity, and indeed is too common a Crime among ſome People, who upon ſmall Provocations, as well as under greater Trials, raſhly wiſh they were dead; not ſeriouſly conſidering how great a Change Death will make. For a Man to wiſh he were dead, is to deſire his Eternal State may be determin'd; and to do this precipitantly, when he knows not whether he ſhall go to Heaven or Hell, be ſav'd or damn'd, is frenzy and madneſs. Moreover, for ſuch as have good Hope, through Grace, of being happy after Death, yet impatiently to deſire their Diſſolution, barely on the account of the Pains and Inconveniences they groan under here, 'tis alſo criminal. For tho the Apoſtle *Paul had a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, and was willing rather to be abſent from the Body, and preſent with the Lord*; yet he was content that God ſhould chuſe for him: And 'twas not the Trials he met with here, but the proſpect he had of a more raviſhing and compleat enjoyment of Chriſt in Heaven, that made him ſit ſo looſe to this World, and deſire a remove to the other.

(5.) Let us all live in the expectation of our great Change. Why does God chaſten us with ſore Pains, and with pining Sickneſs? but to put us in mind of a *greater Change* that will ſhortly overtake us. And as one obſerves, Every dying Year, every declining Day, every drooping Flower and falling Leaf, are but ſo many Emblems of our certain Mortality. And alas, if Sickneſs do not blaſt us in the Bud, if we don't wither in the Bloom of Youth, the

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ſlower Decays of Age will be ſure to mar our Beauty, and cauſe us to bend towards the Earth, till we drop into that from whence we were taken. O, who of us are in a waiting Frame, looking and expecting when we ſhall go hence? Do we live as if every day would be our laſt? God has in Wiſdom and Mercy hid from us the Time of our Death, that we might be *always ready.*

(6.) If God has predetermin'd the Period of Human Life, then 'tis unreaſonable for any to murmur againſt Providence, when their near Relations are remov'd from 'em by Death. Let it quiet and ſatisfy our Minds, that God fix'd the time of their Departure; he call'd 'em in his own time, and has a Sovereign Right to do ſo, without *giving any Account of his Matters to the Children of Men.*

The Holy Angels, that are frequently employ'd in Meſſages of Providence, probably are unacquainted with the Reaſons of the Divine Procedure: and ſurely *we that are but of Yeſterday and know nothing*, may be content to have theſe things hid from us. For this we are ſure of, that God does all things wiſely, and therefore well, yea even thoſe things which appear to us full of Terror; as does that Providence which has ſilenc'd that Excellent Miniſter, in whoſe Place I now ſtand.

I muſt confeſs I am no *Friend* to the Flatteries that are too commonly us'd in Funeral Diſcourſes: nor am I an *Enemy* to the juſt Commendations of ſuch as *die in the Lord*; whoſe extraordinary Worth may give occaſion for it, and be very inſtructive to thoſe that ſurvive. So that in *Charity* to the Living, and in *Juſtice* to the Dead, I ſhall now attempt to

ſay

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ſay ſomething of that Learned and Judicious Miniſter of Chriſt, Mr. *WILLIAM COLLINS*, whom God has ſuddenly remov'd from the midſt of us.

I deſign not a Hiſtory of his Life, nor am I capable to delineate the ſeveral Branches of his Character; yet ſomething I would ſay, that may give you an Idea, tho it be not ſo perfect a one as I could wiſh, of this Great Man.

'Twas early that he diſcover'd an Inclination to Study and Books, and his Progreſs in Learning was ſwift and ſure. When he had paſs'd thro Grammar Learning, and had had the Approbation of one of the moſt ſevere Criticks of this Age, he began to travel; and, if I miſtake not, before that time, God had made him ſenſible of Sin, and drawn him to his Son. When he came abroad, not going ſo far as he at firſt deſign'd, he remain'd a conſiderable time in *France* and *Italy*; where he finiſh'd the Courſe of his other Studies preparatory to that of Theology, to which he cloſely apply'd himſelf upon his Return to *England*. Dr. *Busby.*

I ſhall not mention the encouraging Offers he had to join with the National Church, which he judiciouſly refus'd; for 'twas Conſcience, not Humour, that made him a Diſſenter.

I need not ſay how well he was prepar'd for the Study of Divinity by Nature, Learning, and Grace, for his Proficiency therein ſoon appear'd; and after he had paſs'd a little time preaching in the Country, he had a very remarkable Call by this Church: for the very Day he receiv'd the Letter that invited him to *London*, he had ſolemnly kept by himſelf in Faſting and Prayer, for Direction about diſpo-

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ſing of himſelf for the conſtant Exerciſe of his Miniſtry; and receiving this in the Cloſe of that very Day, he look'd on it as an Anſwer of Prayer, and therefore conſented to make you a Viſit: which having done, and this Church having had ſufficient Proof of his real Piety, as well as of his Gifts and Abilities, you gave him a unanimous Call to the Paſtoral Office. And how well he roſe up to the Qualifications of an Evangelical Biſhop or Elder, as recited by the Apoſtle *Paul*, you of this Church know; and I believe will own, *That he was blameleſs as the Steward of God, not ſelf-will'd, not ſoon angry, not given to Wine, no Striker, not given to filthy Lucre: But a Lover of Hoſpitality, a Lover of good Men, Sober, Juſt, Holy, Temperate: Holding faſt the faithful Word as he had been taught, being able, by ſound Doctrine, both to exhort and convince Gainſayers.* He was apt to teach, and able, upon a ſudden, to bring forth ſomething proper for the uſe of Edifying, out of that excellent Stock of Divine Knowledg that he had treaſur'd up; having more than once, when diſappointed of that Help he expected, gone into the Pulpit, and preach'd an excellent Sermon, in the Opinion of competent Judges. Yet tho he was thus qualify'd, he did not ſerve God nor you with that which coſt him nought, but apply'd himſelf to cloſe Study for every Sermon, when his Health would admit.

Titus 1. 7, 8, 9.

The Subjects he ordinarily inſiſted on in the Courſe of his Miniſtry, were the great and important Truths of the Goſpel, which he handled with great Judgment and Clearneſs. How would he open the Miſeries of the Fall! And in how moving a manner would he diſcourſe of

of the Excellency of Chriſt, and the Virtues of his Blood, and his willingneſs to ſave poor awaken'd burdned Sinners!

How well did he diſtinguiſh betwixt Juſtification and Sanctification, exalting the Imputed Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, without undervaluing the Work of the Spirit! So that his Sermons were uſeful under the Influence of Divine Grace, to convert and edify, to enlighten and eſtabliſh, being drawn from the Fountain of Truth, the Sacred Scriptures, with which he conſtantly convers'd in their Original Languages, having read the beſt Criticks, Antient and Modern; ſo that Men of the greateſt Penetration might learn from his Pulpit-Diſcourſes, as well as thoſe of the meaneſt Capacity.

He did not affect a flaunting ſwelling Stile, but always ſpoke what was Strong and Manly, becoming the Weight of thoſe Truths he deliver'd. He did not ſtudy to amuſe, but inſtruct his Hearers; not ſo much regarding what would pleaſe as profit them, always having on his Mind a Senſe of the Worth of Souls: and therefore he conſtantly adviſed his Brethren of the Miniſtry to take the greateſt Care they could to help forward the Salvation of Sinners, to exalt Chriſt, and not preach themſelves.

He had a rich Stock of Experience as well as of uſeful Knowledg; he felt what he preach'd, and liv'd on that Food he imparted to others. I don't mention his Skill in Phyſick, which he had well ſtudied, as being no Branch of his Character as a Divine. Yet under all theſe excellent Attainments, he was one of the moſt modeſt humble Men that ever I convers'd with. How did this Grace make him ſhine! which is one

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one of the brighteſt Ornaments of the Chriſtian Life.

How low would he ſtoop for Peace! And how would he bear with the Infirmities of his weak Brethren! That ſuch as would not be wrought upon by the Strength of Reaſon, might be melted by his Condeſcenſion and good Nature. He was Prudent as well as Peaceable, Charitable as well as Courteous; one that could forgive and forget Injuries, one that was above reſenting the Affronts that ſome Men love to offer to Perſons of his Character. He was not addicted to utter hard Cenſures of ſuch as differ'd from him in leſſer Matters, but had a Love for all Saints, and conſtantly exercis'd himſelf in this, *To keep a Conſcience void of Offence towards God and towards Man.* He was a Perſon of unaffected ſteddy Piety, free from the wild *Raptures* of Enthuſiaſm, and the dull *Formalities* of Superſtition. When he was not diſcourſing of profitable things, he generally imploy'd himſelf in Meditation; for ordinarily when he left his Studies and came abroad, in the after part of the day, he uſually fixt on ſome Text of Scripture for the Subject of his Meditation as he paſs'd the Streets; ſo that he had a conſtant ſavour of Divine Things on his Spirit; and like *the Wiſe Man* ſpoken of in the Book of *Proverbs*, *His Lips did diſperſe Knowledg.* He was very communicative, and ready to inform thoſe he convers'd with. And I muſt ever own, to the Honour of his Memory, that he acted towards me, not only like a *Friend* but a *Father*, both in directing and incouraging me in my Studies. He has often clear'd up that to my Underſtanding, which before was perplext and obſcure. He has pray'd with me, and

and comforted me; but he is abſent: O! how do I miſs my Guide and my Friend? And do not you, my Brethren? I am ſure you do. What is the Lord a doing! What Removes has he made! How can we forbear to cry out, *O the Chariots of* Iſrael, *and the Horſemen thereof!*

As for you that were under his Care, you lay near his Heart; and *how greatly he long'd for you all in the Bowels of Chriſt*, I am his Witneſs: I, did I ſay? The God in whoſe preſence I ſtand, and at whoſe Bar I muſt ſhortly appear, is his Witneſs. I ſpeak this with ſo great ſolemnity, becauſe he mention'd it to me with ſuch Affection and Tears, and told me how glad he would have been to have ſeen you ſettled with a Judicious Learned Miniſter before he died; but God ſaw meet to remove him before this deſirable thing was accompliſh'd.

Indeed he was not apprehenſive of his Death in the time of his laſt Illneſs, but had ſome kind of hope that he ſhould have recover'd. Yet I cannot but look on it as a remarkable Providence, that he ſhould be directed in the courſe of his Miniſtry to fix on thoſe words, *Then ſaith he unto his Diſciples, The Harveſt truly is plenteous, but the Labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harveſt, that he will ſend forth Labourers into his Harveſt:* And that the *laſt Sermon* he ever preach'd ſhould be from them; I pray God it may have a due effect upon all that heard it, for you'l hear him no more. But from the laſt time of his appearing in the Pulpit, I am preſently brought to his Sick-bed. Mat. 9. 37, 38.

As he was conſtantly calm in his Mind in the time of his Health, ſo he was during his laſt

laſt Sickneſs. Upon the firſt Viſit that I made him, I enquir'd how things were betwixt God and his Soul? He told me, That *he bleſs'd God all was well.* And all along he was very eaſy with reſpect to Life or Death; he had for a great while ſat ſo looſe to this World, that he had no ſuch deſires of Life as ſhould imbitter his Death, or ſuch fears of Death as ſhould render his Life uncomfortable. For when a Miniſter, with whom he was very intimate, took notice of his Weakneſs, and apprehending him in danger, ſaid to him, *Sir, I hope you are not afraid to die:* He anſwer'd, with great preſence of Mind, and a chearful Countenance, *I bleſs God, I have not been afraid to die this forty Years.* My Brethren, ſome Men may talk high, and look big when they are in Health; but for a Man to ſpeak thus in the view of Eternity, ſeems to argue not only great ſtrength of Faith, but a bright and unclouded Aſſurance of the Divine Love.

He was, during his Illneſs, much inclin'd to ſleep; ſo that he ſeldom ſpoke unleſs he was preſs'd to it. We were ſometimes ready to flatter our ſelves with the expectation of his Recovery, but a few days put an end to our Hopes, and his valuable Life. He was a Servant to the Prince of Peace: He preach'd a Goſpel of Peace, and he had a peaceful Death. *Mark the Perfect, behold the Upright, for the end of that Man is Peace.* I know to mention his Death, is like ſtriking a Dagger to ſome of your Hearts, and I confeſs it has almoſt put a Period to my Diſcourſe. I won't ſay what I feel my ſelf, and with what a ſtruggle I ſpeak to you; 'twould be an eaſe could I ſtop here, and mingle my Sighs and Tears with yours.

But,

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But, my Brethren, let us abate our Sorrows, becauſe the Soul of our deceas'd Friend is happy in Heaven, and his Memory ſhall be bleſſed upon Earth, *Whoſe Praiſe is in all the Churches of Chriſt.* And let me add, whatever you have heard, and learn'd, and ſeen in him as a follower of Chriſt, that do.

Now to you his ſorrowful ſurviving Half, conſider the Stroke that is given was by the direction of Heaven; and tho you have loſt a valuable Relation, one that is nearer and better is yet left; *Your Maker is your Husband.* He that has taken your dear Conſort from you, had a better Right in him than you; therefore a ſubmiſſive Silence becomes you under this terrible Stroke.

To you the tender Branches of his Family, and the Children of his Body, don't forget the Counſel of your deceas'd Father. Remember the Inſtructions he gave you in the Things of God, and the Concerns of your Souls; how he pray'd with you, and for you: May every one of you ſo ſerve the God of your Father in this World, that you may ſpend an Eternity with him in the other.

To you, my Brethren of the Church; bleſs God that you enjoy'd your Excellent Paſtor ſo long, but mourn that you got no more good from him, who took ſo much pains with you.

Indeed your Circumſtances are deplorable, God ſeems to have a Controverſy with you; ſearch out the Cauſes of his Diſpleaſure, and humble your Souls before him; bear one another's Burdens, follow the Things that make for Peace, and thoſe whereby you may edify one another: Be earneſt at the Throne of Grace, that God would give you a Paſtor after his

his own Heart, that ſhall feed you with Knowledg, and help to nouriſh up your Souls to Eternal Life. *Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the Dead our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the Everlaſting Covenant, make you perfect in every Good Work to do his Will, working in you that which is well pleaſing in his ſight, through Jeſus Chriſt, to whom be Glory for ever.* Amen.

Heb. 13. 20, 21.

UNION

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UNION and PEACE Recommended;

IN A

SERMON

Preach'd to

Several CONGREGATIONS

Assembled together *April* 17. 1704.

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ROM. XIV. 19.

Let us therefore follow after the things which make for Peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

HE Province aſſign'd me at this time, I have not undertaken without ſome concern of mind; yet I would hope there is ſo much Charity in this Aſſembly, that Truth, from whomſoever it comes, will not be deſpis'd. 'Tis not the Buſineſs of a Faction, but the Cauſe of God in our hands, that I ſhall attempt to promote. My Deſign is not to ſtir up Strife, but to diffuſe the grateful Odours of Charity, and to recommend Union and a good Correſpondence to the Churches of Jeſus Chriſt.

The Imperfections of human Nature ſince the Fall are ſo great, and the Prejudices fix'd by a different Education ſo many, that 'tis not probable we ſhould concur exactly in all the ſame Opinions; yet 'tis highly reaſonable that Chriſtians ſhould have Charity for

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each other, and that *they ſhould love as Brethren*; eſpecially ſince the things wherein we all *agree* are infinitely greater, and of higher importance than thoſe wherein we *differ*. And now why ſhould we not *agree to differ*, without either Enmity or Scorn? For certainly for one Chriſtian to cenſure and condemn another merely becauſe he cannot agree with him in ſmall or indifferent things, is as unreaſonable as for one Man to quarrel with the reſt of the World, becauſe they have not his Features and Complexion.

The Apoſtle *Paul* being well aware of the ill Conſequences that await ſo uncharitable a Spirit, attempts to correct it (in this Chapter of which my Text is a part) by thoſe Arguments that are juſt and moving; that if poſſible he might prevail with the *Jewiſh* and *Gentile* Converts, tho of different Apprehenſions in leſſer matters, to exerciſe mutual Charity and Forbearance towards each other, ſo as to continue in the ſame Communion. And one Conſideration he urges to perſuade to this, is, That how much ſoever theſe Chriſtians differ'd in their Opinions about the eating of ſuch Meats, and the obſervation of ſuch Days as were in themſelves indifferent, ſince both of them aim'd at the
Ver. 6,7,8. Divine Glory; ſuch Differences ſhould make no breach in their Communion, nor ſhould they
Ver. 3. ſo far indulge their Paſſions, as to *deſpiſe* and
10. *judg* one another. For, ſays the Apoſtle, *we*
12. *ſhall all ſtand before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt: And every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelf to God. Q. D.* 'Tis highly unreaſonable that we ſhould aſſume the Power of cenſuring and judging each other, ſince we muſt

all

all ſtand upon the ſame level before the aweful Tribunal of the Son of God. May the thoughts of the laſt and great Aſſize put a ſtop to thoſe Cenſures you too freely vent one againſt another. *Let us not therefore judg one another any more; but judg this rather, that no man put a ſtumbling-block, or occaſion to fall in his Brother's way.* Q. D. Inſtead of uttering uncharitable Cenſures one of another, let us rather keep this Rule in view, *viz.* That we induſtriouſly avoid the giving any Scandal or Offence. Let thoſe that underſtand the compaſs of their Chriſtian Liberty, not unſeaſonably uſe it to diſquiet and ſcandalize the Weak; and let the weak in the Faith, that labour under *Jewiſh* Prejudices, be careful that they don't pronounce any raſh Cenſures on the *Gentile* Converts, who have a clearer view of the Liberty indulg'd by the *Chriſtian Inſtitution.* In the 14*th* verſe the Apoſtle intimates, that every Chriſtian muſt act agreeably to the Perſuaſion of his Mind, and the Dictates of his Conſcience. *I know, and am perſuaded by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that there is nothing unclean of it ſelf; but to him that eſteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.* Q. D. If a Man ſhall believe there is a difference in certain Meats, that ſome of them are unclean and ought not to be eaten, it would be a Sin for ſuch a one to partake of thoſe Meats, becauſe he acts againſt his own Perſuaſion and Conſcience; and tho his Conſcience be erroneous in that matter, yet acting againſt it, he diſcovers daring Preſumption in venturing to do that which he apprehends to be a Sin againſt God. The Apoſtle, in the two following verſes, perſuades to mutual Charity and

Ver. 13.

Ver. 14.

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Forbearance, from the ill Conſequences that might enſue by the exerciſe of the contrary
Ver. 17. Temper. He then aſſures them, That *the Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteouſneſs and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt. Q. D.* Surely, you are unacquainted with the Deſign of Chriſtianity, or elſe you have forgotten wherein *true and undefil'd Religion* doth conſiſt, that you ſhould with ſo much warmth engage in matters of an indifferent nature. Alas! *the Eſſence of Religion* conſiſts *in Righteouſneſs and Peace, and Joy in*
Ver. 18. *the Holy Ghoſt. For he that in theſe things ſerveth Chriſt, is acceptable to God, and approv'd of Men.* As for theſe indifferent Matters, 'tis not your eating or not eating, your obſerving or not obſerving thoſe days; but he that in Righteouſneſs, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, ſerveth Chriſt, whether a *Jewiſh* or a *Gentile* Chriſtian, whether too much entangled with unneceſſary Scruples, or more advanced in his Knowledg with reſpect to his Chriſtian Liberty, *He is accepted of God, and approved of Men.* From all which the Apoſtle infers, as in the words of the Text; *Let us therefore follow after the things which make for Peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.*

Let us therefore follow after the things which make for Peace, *i. e.* the Peace of the Church; and thoſe things wherewith one may edify another, *i. e.* by improving one another in Knowledg, Grace and Comfort. 'Tis the former part of the words I ſhall principally inſiſt on, tho I ſhall not wholly omit to glance on the latter. And for the more profitable managing of my Diſcourſe upon this Text, it ſhall be under theſe four general Heads.

Firſt,

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First, I ſhall ſtate the Notion of that Peace we are exhorted to purſue.

Secondly, Show you how reaſonable it is to follow ſuch a Peace.

Thirdly, Inſtance in ſome of thoſe things, which, if regularly purſu'd, will make for the Peace of the Churches of Jeſus Chriſt.

Fourthly, I ſhall make the Uſe and Improvement of the whole.

First, I am to ſtate the Notion of that Peace and Union we are exhorted by the Apoſtle to purſue: For tho Peace be a very deſirable thing, yet we are not to purſue it at all adventures. We ought indeed to put forth our ſelves to the utmoſt to obtain and preſerve Unity and Concord, yet never to purchaſe it at the expence of *Holineſs*, *Truth* and *Order*. Therefore,

1. The Union and Peace, that by this Text we are exhorted to purſue, muſt be in conjunction with Holineſs. Real Holineſs is neceſſary to make us eaſy upon Earth, and happy in Heaven: wherever Sin reigns, it will occaſion ſtinging remorſe, and create confuſion in mens Souls. So that whatever Methods are taken for the obtaining of Peace, that are not conſiſtent with Righteouſneſs, they'l be ſo far from promoting Union and a good Correſpondence among Chriſtians, that they'l cauſe us to be at diſcord with our ſelves, and will continually diſquiet our own Minds. Let us therefore attend to the Advice of the Apoſtle; *Follow Peace with all men, and Holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord: i. e.* no one Heb. 12. 14.

without Holineſs can *enjoy God*, either in his Ordinances upon Earth, or by being rais'd to the beatifick Viſion in Heaven. The reaſon is very obvious: there is ſo great a Contrariety between the unſanctified Faculties of wicked Men, and the purified Objects of the inviſible State, that 'tis impoſſible in the very nature of the thing, that there ſhould be any real Pleaſure and Happineſs, where there is ſo great a diſagreement betwixt the Faculty and the Object. And whatever Soul is thus diſorder'd, it would not be happy were it fix'd in the midſt of Paradiſe it ſelf. What ſignifies a Conſort of Muſick to one that is deaf? or heaps of Gold to one ſcorcht with the flames of a Fever? Thus equally diſagreeable would be the Society and Imploy of the Bleſſed to an unholy Man; and equally unſucceſsful will be all Methods to procure Peace in prejudice to Holineſs.

Holineſs is one of the diſtinguiſhing Glories of the Goſpel; for there never was any Inſtitution in the World, whether Human or Divine, that did ſo ſtrictly require Holineſs of Heart and Life, as the Goſpel of the Bleſſed God, which obliges us to flee from the very ſhadow of Vice. What ſhall I ſay of Holineſs! 'Tis the moral Glory of the Deity, and there is nothing that does ſo much improve and ennoble a human or angelical Spirit. Therefore, my Brethren, let us always take care that Holineſs be at the bottom of our Union, or elſe it will be no better than a Confederacy with Sin; like what the Prophet complains of, *They ſhall gather together, but not by me*; *i. e.* not with my Approbation and Bleſſing. And ſuch a kind of Union as that,

Iſa. 54. 15.

is

is fitly enough reſembled by the Image mention'd in *Daniel*, whoſe feet were partly Iron, and partly Clay, which ſoon fell to pieces, being compos'd of ſuch diſagreeable Materials: and the ſame end ſooner or later will attend all ſinful Confederacies.

2. The Peace we are to purſue, muſt be in conjunction with Truth. *We can'* (ſays the Apoſtle) *do nothing againſt the Truth.* He could go as far as any Man to procure and promote Peace, but never in prejudice to Holineſs and Truth. And I obſerve that the ſame Apoſtle, in his excellent Deſcription of *Charity*, ſays, That *it rejoiceth not in Iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth.* By *Truth* here I underſtand the Goſpel, or the Chriſtian Faith, agreeable to that of the Apoſtle *John*; *I rejoiced greatly to find thy Children walking in the Truth, i. e.* in the Faith and Fellowſhip of the Goſpel. Now if by Truth in the former we underſtand the ſame as we do in the latter Text, *viz.* the pure unſophiſticated Doctrine of Chriſtianity, then the Apoſtle plainly intimates, that *Charity it ſelf* will not allow us to aſſociate and unite with thoſe whoſe Doctrines ſap the Foundation of the Chriſtian Religion. *Charity* cannot rejoice in *Iniquity or Falſhood*, but it rejoiceth *alone in the Truth.*

2 Cor. 13. 8.

1 Cor. 13. 6.

But here I would not be miſunderſtood. Chriſtians may differ in their Notions and Opinions about thoſe Matters that are *leſs clearly reveal'd*, or that are *indifferent* in their own nature. Yet this may be without dividing in our Affections, or making any breach in our Chriſtian Communion. Why ſhould our different Apprehenſions in leſſer Matters, abate our mutual reſpects? ſince God

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loves a ſincere Chriſtian, tho he be weak, and knows not the extent of his Liberty. And if he receives ſuch a one, why ſhould not thoſe that are ſtrong in the Faith receive him alſo, and exerciſe that Love and Charity towards him, which is due to all the Members of Chriſt's myſtical Body?

Indeed as formerly there was no fixing *Dagon* and the Ark together, ſo can there not be any agreement now between the Temple of God and Idols. Whatever Principle in Religion ſtrikes at the Foundation, it forbids our Union with thoſe that patronize it; for ſo far as we unite with ſuch, we countenance Error and betray the Truth. 'Tis remarkable, that the * *Jews* in *Ezra*'s time would not aſſociate with the *Samaritans*, becauſe (tho they pretended to *fear the Lord*) they took the unwarrantable liberty of *ſerving their own Gods*. 'Tis equally unreaſonable and criminal for thoſe who adhere to the *Doctrine according to Godlineſs*, to coaleſce with thoſe that are corrupted with *damnable Hereſies*, that *deny the Lord that bought 'em, and that teach for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*. I grant that our Charity ought not to be confin'd to a Party which concurs exactly with us in all things; yet the Limits fix'd by the Apoſtle ſhould bound us with reſpect to our Communion, where People acknowledg *One Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm*.

* 2 Kings 17.33. *comp. with* Ezra 4. 1, 2, 3.

Eph. 4.5.

8. That Peace and Union we are to purſue, muſt be conſiſtent with Order and Diſtinction. The Peace which the Apoſtle recommends to the Children of God, is not deſign'd to deſtroy the Government he has fix'd in his Church: *For God is not the Author of Confuſion,*

1 Cor. 14.33.

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ſion, but of Peace, as in all the Churches of the Saints. In the Churches of Chriſt, ſome have greater and ſome leſſer Gifts; ſome have larger and others ſmaller meaſures of Grace: which Variety truly ſubſerves the Intereſt of the whole, as does the juſt diſtinction of Publick Officers and Private Members. Now the Union and Peace which the Text recommends, is not intended to deſtroy this Diſtinction and Order. There is an admirable Union in the natural Body, wherein the Eye is ſerviceable to the Ear, the Ear to the Eye, the Hand to the Foot, the Foot to the Hand, without invading each others Offices. Care indeed ought to be taken, that the *Privileges of the Church* may be ſecured, and yet that the *Power of the Paſtor* be not infring'd; and when 'tis thus, they mutually ſtrengthen and aſſiſt each other. 'Tis the Work of an Elder, not only to *feed* but to *govern.* And agreeably hereunto, the Author to the *Hebrews* gives direction to the *governed* concerning their deportment and behaviour: *Obey them that have the rule over you,* Heb. 13. 17. *and ſubmit your ſelves; for they watch for your Souls, as they that muſt give an account, that they may do it with Joy, and not with Grief; for that is unprofitable for you.* The Government which an Evangelical Paſtor is to exerciſe, muſt not be deſpotick and arbitrary, but the Church muſt be govern'd with her own conſent: 'Tis not a ſtately Domination, or imperious Sway, but a ruling by meek Perſuaſion, agreeable to the Rules exhibited in Divine Revelation. What tho ordain'd Miniſters are called *Biſhops* or *Overſeers* in the New Teſtament, yet they are not to *lord* it 2 Cor. 1. 24.

over

over the People's Faith, but to act as *Helpers* of their Joy. And in what ſacred Society ſoever there is a ſtrict regard had to the Order and Diſtinction Chriſt hath fix'd in it, there will be mutual Endearments betwixt the Officers and private Members; which will lay a Foundation for a laſting Union. But where the Order of Chriſt is inverted, and the Diſtinction he has made betwixt the Officers and People confounded, and both brought upon the ſame Level, ſuch lie expos'd to all the Miſeries of Anarchy; for People then will act as did the Children of *Iſrael* when without a King: Every Man did that which was right in his own Eyes.

I proceed now to the *ſecond* general Head, which is, to ſhew you how reaſonable 'tis to purſue ſuch a Union and Peace as I have ſtated.

1. It will appear to be highly reaſonable that we purſue Union and Peace, if we conſider what Authority has enjoin'd it: And that is no leſs than His, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Now where the Word of a King is, the Wiſe-Man ſays, there is Power. And how great Authority accompanies the Command of him that is Head of all Principalities and Powers, who having always lain in the Boſom of the Father, muſt neceſſarily be acquainted with his Will? Ob-
John 15.12. ſerve with what Majeſty he ſpeaks; *This is my Commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you.* At the 17*th* Verſe alſo, *Theſe things I command you, that you love one*
John 13.34. *another.* Again, *A new Commandment give I unto you, that you love one another.* This Com-

mandment is not abſolutely new; for we find that to *love our Neighbour as our ſelves*, was enjoin'd under the Moſaick Oeconomy, and was indeed a main Precept of the Law of Nature. Yet this Command may be ſaid to be new, as 'tis enlarg'd both with reſpect to the Object, (we being oblig'd to love all Men, even our very Enemies) and in regard of the intenſeneſs thereof; for the Expreſſions of our Love muſt run higher, being requir'd on ſome occaſions to lay down our Lives for the Brethren. Finally, this Command is not only inculcated with greater frequency than formerly, but preſs'd upon us from the bright Example of our Bleſſed Saviour; which is certainly a new Motive affix'd to this Precept, for which, no doubt, among other things, 'tis call'd a new Commandment.

Now ſurely 'tis the moſt reaſonable thing in the world that we ſhould obey the Son of God, and ſubmit to his Authority, who has not only made us, but redeem'd us; not only purchas'd us with his Blood, but renew'd us by his Spirit, if we are real Chriſtians. And if the Authority of Him who has a right in us by Nature, by Purchaſe, by Conqueſt, and by Contract, will not faſten this Precept on our Conſciences; I know not what will: eſpecially conſidering that the time he gave this in charge, was when he was juſt ready to take his leave of his Diſciples, and drew near to the laſt Scene of his Sufferings and Sorrows; ſo that this Command may be look'd on as a part of his laſt Will and Teſtament, and what he pronounc'd as 'twere with his dying Breath. Now as we generally take the ſtricteſt notice of the words of a *dying Friend*, how much more ſhould we

be

be mov'd by the words of *a dying Saviour*; one who when he came into this World brought Peace with him, and when he went out of it left Peace behind him!

It has been often remark'd, that our Saviour choſe to be born in the moſt quiet and peaceful State of the Roman Empire, when *Auguſtus*, in token of an Univerſal Peace, had ſhut up the Myſtical Gates of *Janus* his Temple *. And we are inform'd by Divine Revelation, that the Heavenly Choir that ſung at our Saviour's Nativity, tun'd their melodious Voices to the ſoft Airs of Divine Love, and warbled out *Peace on Earth, and Good-Will towards Men.* And the Bleſſed Jeſus himſelf, a little before his *exit*, bequeaths Peace as his Legacy to his Diſciples: *Peace I leave with you, my Peace I give unto you.* Tho this Peace may principally refer to the great Goſpel-Bleſſing of Reconciliation with God; yet there is no doubt but it comprehends alſo the Peace we have been treating of.

But ſome may be ready to ſay, How is this conſiſtent with what our Saviour affirms elſewhere, when he declares, *He was not come to ſend Peace on Earth, but a Sword?*

I anſwer, We are not to underſtand it as if he ſpoke of the natural tendency of the Doctrines of his Holy Religion, but of the accidental Event of them thro the malice and perverſeneſs of Men. Therefore 'tis obſervable, that in the whole of our Saviour's Conduct he did diſcountenance every thing that had the ap-

* *The* Romans *were the moſt warlike People in the World; ſo that in ſeven Centuries that had elaps'd before the Incarnation of our Saviour, they enjoy'd no more than two years Peace, which makes it the more remarkable that our Saviour ſhould be born in the time of a Univerſal Peace.*

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pearance of Ill-Nature and Revenge, and recommended the practice of that Religion which is both *pure* and *peaceable:* A Religion that raiſes the exerciſes of *Love* to the higheſt pitch! It cannot be denied, but that in the Books that were written by the Philoſophers of *Greece* and *Rome*, there are ſome excellent Rules of Morality. Yet the beſt of thoſe Heathen Moraliſts did frequently affirm, That * Revenge was ſweeter than Life it ſelf, and did not only allow but recommend the practice of it; affirming, that *not to revenge a Wrong, is an Argument of Fear and Sloth, of an unmanly and degenerous Mind:* which is directly oppoſite, as any thing can be, to the Genius and Spirit of Chriſtianity. For no Inſtitution of Life did ever recommend Peace and Charity with ſo peculiar a force of Expreſſion, and ſuch a vehemence of Stile, as the Chriſtian Revelation does. Let us therefore attend to what is requir'd by the Head and Founder of our Religion: *But I ſay unto you, Love your Enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that deſpitefully uſe and perſecute you.* Now ſince we are bound by the Authority of the Son of God to love all Men, even our very Enemies, how much ſtronger is the Obligation upon us to love all Chriſtians, and to follow the things that make for Peace, with all thoſe that are nearly allied to the Prince of Peace? Mat. 5. 44.

2. The Reaſonableneſs of *following the things that make for Peace*, will farther appear, if we conſider what Examples there are in Scrip-

* Ariſtotle *and* Cicero.

ture

ture to enforce ſuch an Exhortation. Altho the Commands of an *Incarnate God* carry with them an Authority to a Man's Conſcience, yet when reduc'd to practice, as in the Example of good Men, they ſhow that the Duties enjoin'd are not only reaſonable, but practicable. The Command enlightens the Underſtanding, but 'tis Example that attracts the Will and Affections. The Authority of Chriſt in the Precept awes the Conſcience, but an agreeable Example quickens the motion of the Soul, and promotes an intire conformity. Now to engage us in the purſuit of Peace, we have the Examples of the beſt Men in every Age of the Church. *Nehemiah* had ſo great a regard to the Union and Peace of the Church, that he could not be eaſy with all the Pleaſures of the *Perſian* Court, while *Jeruſalem* was deſolate, and her Walls broken down; but he *ſat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and faſted and prayed before the God of Heaven.*

Nehem. 1. 3, 4.

Nothing lay nearer the heart of the Divine Pſalmiſt, than the Good of the Church, as appears by thoſe warm and moving Expreſſions: *If I forget thee, O* Jeruſalem, *let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth: if I prefer not* Jeruſalem *above my chief joy.* And in another Pſalm, *Pray for the Peace of* Jeruſalem; *they ſhall proſper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and proſperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions ſakes, I will now ſay, Peace be within thee.* And in the New Teſtament what a bright Example was the Apoſtle *Paul*, and how frequently did he inculcate Charity in his Diſcourſes, and recommend it in his Life? *Now I beſeech you, brethren, by*

Pſal. 137. 5, 6.

Pſal. 122. 6, 7, 8.

1 Cor. 1. 10.

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the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that you all ſpeak the ſame thing, and that there be no diviſion among you; and that you be perfectly join'd together in the ſame mind, and in the ſame judgment. And how forcible are thoſe Expreſſions of the ſame Apoſtle to the *Philippians*; *If there be therefore any conſolation in Chriſt, if any comfort of Love, if any fellowſhip of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies; fulfill ye my joy, that you be like-minded, having the ſame love, being of one accord, of one mind.* And elſewhere, ſays this Apoſtle of the Gentiles; *If any man have a mind to be contentious, we have no ſuch cuſtom, nor the Churches of God.* Now what this excellent Perſon had inculcated in his Diſcourſes, he did admirably exemplify in his Life; denying himſelf in things that were lawful, that he might not ſcandalize the Weak; and tho *free* from all men, yet he made himſelf a *Servant* to all, that he might win the more, and *maintain the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.* Phil. 2. 1, 2.

But let us turn our Eyes from the Servant, to the brighter Example of his Lord. The Servant indeed did ſhine with the luſtre of a Star, but the Example of his and our Lord with a brightneſs like the Sun, that Globe of Fire that heats as well ase nlightens the World. Chriſt's Example is proper to direct and perſuade, to guide and move the Soul. *Walk in love, as Chriſt hath loved us:* And *ſee that ye love one another, as I have loved you.* Here's the moſt perfect Example plac'd in our view, and recommended to our imitation; 'tis the Example of Him who is *Love it ſelf*, who was unwearied in doing good, even for thoſe that cenſur'd his Goodneſs, and abus'd his Kindneſs, faſtening upon him Names of Reproach, in return Eph. 5. 2. John 13. 34. 1 John.

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return for his Benefits: yet none of theſe things did diſcourage his Progreſs, for he conſtantly render'd Good for Evil; and ſhow'd a great deal more kindneſs to his inveterate Enemies, than others do to their beſt Friends: *For when we were without ſtrength, in due time Chriſt died for the ungodly.* O how did he bear the contradiction of Sinners againſt himſelf, and when revil'd, open'd not his mouth, unleſs to inſtruct them or pray for them; and that he did even in the midſt of his Agony! *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* If Chriſt had ſo much love for his Enemies, ſurely it becomes us who pretend to be his Diſciples, to love one another *with pure hearts fervently.* Did our Lord while on Earth recommend Union among his Friends and Followers, by his Example as well as his Command? ſurely 'tis highly reaſonable that we who claim an Alliance with this Prince of Peace, ſhould with a flaming, but regular Zeal, *follow the things that make for Peace.* And this leads to the

3*d* Reaſon, which ſhall be drawn from the *ſtrict Relation* there is betwixt all thoſe that are the Children of God. *All men naturally are of Kin, and Friends to each other,* ſays an antient Philoſopher. And a more excellent Perſon than he, aſſures us that God *hath made of one Blood all Nations of Men to dwell on the face of the Earth.* "There is (as a great Man obſerves) an eſſential *Relation* as well as *Likeneſs* between one Man and another, which nothing can ever diſſolve, becauſe 'tis founded in that which no man can diveſt himſelf of in *human Nature.*" By this we are brought under an obligation to love all Mankind. Now our being brought into a nearer and nobler Relation,

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Relation, does not leſſen but very much increaſe our Obligation to love one another. All the Children of God are juſtified by the ſame Righteouſneſs: *The Righteouſneſs of Chriſt is unto all, and upon all that believe, and there is no difference.* And ſo for Sanctification, all true Chriſtians are purified and influenced by the ſame Spirit: And conſequently the Relation between one Chriſtian and another muſt be more intimate and near, than what is barely between one Man and another, tho allied by Affinity or Blood. My own Brother according to the Fleſh, is near of kin to me, tho the Soul that animates his Body is diſtinct from mine; but if I am a true Believer, and adopted into the Family of Heaven, I am influenced by the ſame Spirit as are all the Houſhold of Faith. Some Philoſophers have argued in favour of an *Univerſal Intellect*, ſuppoſing *that there was a general Soul which did actuate the whole Frame of Nature.* But waving any Diſpute about that Principle, this we are aſſured of by Divine Revelation, *viz.* That all who are under the Bonds of the Everlaſting Covenant, are animated by one and the ſame Spirit: *For if any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his.* Rom. 8. 9. And the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of Chriſt's being Head of the Church, ſays, *From whom the whole Body fitly join'd together, and compacted by that which every joint ſupplieth, according to the effectual working in the meaſure of every part, maketh encreaſe of the Body unto the edifying it ſelf in love.* Now if any Perſons in the World have reaſon to purſue the things that make for Peace, certainly we have, who profeſs to be under the influence of the ſame kind and good Spirit. If we are to follow Peace with all Men,

becauſe Brethren in a large ſenſe, as deſcending from the ſame Original, how much more ſhould we endeavour after it with thoſe that have a nearer, higher, and nobler alliance to us; who profeſs the ſame Religion, are Children of the ſame Father, Members of the ſame myſtical Body, Temples of the ſame Holy Spirit, retain'd in the Service of the ſame Maſter, Subjects of the ſame Prince, influenced by the ſame Hope, carrying on the ſame great Ends and Deſigns, under the encouragement of the ſame Promiſes, and as being Heirs of the ſame Kingdom and Glory: I ſay, how reaſonable is it, that we that are under ſo many ſacred and endearing Ties, ſhould live in Peace, and follow the things that may moſt promote it?

4. The Reaſonableneſs of this Duty will further appear, if we conſider the conſtant and unwearied endeavour of Satan and wicked Men to break the Peace of the Church. 'Tis hardly to be expreſs'd what induſtry is us'd by the malignant Spirits of darkneſs, and the various Inſtruments under their influence, to break the Union and diſturb the Peace of the Church: ſometimes by promoting the diſcuſſion of unprofitable Queſtions, and the warm management of unneceſſary Diſputes; at other times by raiſing and fomenting Jealouſies among Chriſtians one of another. Sometimes wicked men put on a Mask of Religion, and ſo get into ſacred Societies, on purpoſe to ſow diſcord among Brethren.

5. We ought to follow the things that make for Peace, becauſe of the great advantages that will enſue thereupon.

(1.) By

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(1.) By purſuing of Unity and Concord, we ſhall gain a great deal of true and ſolid Pleaſure. The firſt views we take of Charity in its exerciſe, and the tendency that generous Principles and Actions have towards Union and Peace, without any long reflection, are ſecretly approv'd by us, and occaſion in us a real and rational Pleaſure. We cannot but be ſatisfied and delighted with the Exerciſes of Charity, unleſs our Powers are greatly deprav'd and vitiated.

A Man that has a clear Eye or a good Ear, cannot but be pleas'd with Beauty and Harmony. Man was made for Society, and naturally abhors Solitude: Infinite Wiſdom thought it not good for him to be alone, even in a ſtate of Innocence; Paradiſe it ſelf was render'd more pleaſant by mutual Converſe: and no doubt but it will be a part of the happineſs of Heaven, that we ſhall be favour'd with the agreeable Society of the Angels, and the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect; whoſe Love to God is always ardent, and whoſe united Endeavours to advance the Divine Glory, will occaſion a true and a laſting Pleaſure to ſpring up in their Minds.

While we live in the exerciſe of Love, which is the ſofteſt and ſweeteſt of all the Paſſions, we free our ſelves from thoſe things that are unruly and troubleſom, diſquieting and tormenting; our Minds are calm and chearful, ſerene and pleaſant; and every reflection we make upon what is paſt, increaſes our Pleaſure, ſo that this Duty carries with it its own Reward.

I know 'tis commonly ſaid, that Revenge is ſweet: but I am ſure, that to a Man of a great and generous Soul, the exerciſes of Charity will

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give a truer guſt of real Pleaſure. For there is no man that meditates Revenge, but he has a thouſand unquiet Agitations in his breaſt; and when he begins to cool, and ſeriouſly conſider, he is angry with himſelf and aſham'd of his Folly: whereas there is *no torment in Love*, as the Apoſtle obſerves, but it produces a real and a ſublimated Pleaſure. He that follows the things that make for Peace, has the teſtimony of a good Conſcience in favour of his Actions, as well as the approbation of all wiſe and good Men; but that which is more than all, he has the favour of God, and ſhall have the honour of being number'd with his Chil-

Mat. 5. 9. dren. *Bleſſed are the Peace-makers, for they ſhall be call'd the Children of God.*

Union and Agreement (ſays one) is the Soul of the Univerſe, the Ornament of Heaven and Earth, the Life and Joy of both

Pſal. 133. 1. Worlds. *Behold* (ſays the Pſalmiſt) *how good and how pleaſant it is for Brethren to dwell together in Unity!* If the Agreement of others gives us ſo charming a view, what an exalted Pleaſure muſt they feel that are of one Heart and one Way! Indeed that Chriſtian, whoſe natural temper is none of the beſt, will find the Exerciſes of Charity ſomewhat difficult at firſt: which an ingenious Modern does illuſtrate thus. 'Tis (ſays he) like a Man that has ſome acquaintance with Geometry; if he does but juſt caſt his eye upon a ſubtil Theorem, it ſeems perplex'd and difficult; but if he begins at the ſimple Principles, and ſo advances by degrees through the intermediate Propoſitions, he will with eaſe attain a Demonſtration of it. So if a Chriſtian follow the things that make for Peace, and is found in the exerciſe of thoſe

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Graces that have a tendency to promote Union and a good Correſpondence, he will loſe his Prejudices by degrees, which he had imbib'd againſt the poſſibility and practicableneſs of this Duty, and begin to have a reliſh of the moſt agreeable Pleaſure.

(2.) Another Advantage that attends the practice of the Duty I am recommending, is, that it will be for the ſecurity and defence of the Church. The bleſſed Jeſus indeed is the *Rock* on which the Church is built, and the *Head* by which ſhe is influenc'd and govern'd: yet without detracting from the honour of our Lord, we may ſay, that Union between her ſeveral Members is her ſubordinate Strength and Safety. The Apoſtle, after he had recommended to the *Coloſſians* the practice of various important Duties, adds, *And above all theſe things put on Charity, which is the * Bond of perfectneſs, or a perfect Bond. And let the Peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which alſo you are called in one Body; and be ye thankful.* Q. D. Charity is the moſt excellent Grace in it ſelf, and the moſt beneficial in its Exerciſes; it will not only be ornamental to your Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, but the Cement of the Church, and ſo will defend you againſt a great many Evils to which you would be otherwiſe expos'd.

All the Perſecutions that have fallen on the Churches of Chriſt, have not weaken'd them half ſo much as the Diviſions of their own Members. Where there is Strife and Conten-

* Σύνδεσμος ſignifies ſuch a Bond as unites different Things or Perſons together; which makes it evident the Apoſtle is ſpeaking of that Charity we owe to one another.

tion, Diſcord and Animoſity in a Society, it ſoon looſens and weakens the Bands that hold it together. How have the moſt flouriſhing Churches, as well as Kingdoms, been deſtroy'd by their own Diſſenſions! When *Jeruſalem* was beſieg'd by *Titus Veſpaſian*, all his battering Rams did not half ſo much miſchief to the Jews, as the Diviſions occaſion'd among them by their fiery Zealots, who provok'd them to deſtroy one another. The rage and violence of Enemies cannot do ſo much injury to Sacred Societies as their own Members, when they give a looſe to their indecent Paſſions; which weaken their Hands, and divide their Strength, and have a direct tendency to diſſolve and break them in pieces. And ſo much the Apoſtle intimates in that excellent Caution he gives the *Galatians*; *But if you bite and devour one another* (ſays he) *take heed ye be not conſum'd one of another.* 'Tis Union, and a good Correſpondence, that muſt make us ſtedfaſt and unmovable; for our Bleſſed Saviour hath aſſured us, that *a Kingdom divided againſt it ſelf cannot ſtand.* Where all the Members of a Church are united as one Man, they are in an excellent poſture of defence; but when they are toſſed about with every wind of Doctrine, and begin to promote Parties and Factions, they preſently become an eaſy Prey to thoſe that lie in wait to deceive.

Eccleſ. 4. 12. A ſingle Thred is ſoon ſnapt aſunder; but as the wiſe Man obſerves, a *threefold Cord is not quickly broken.* 'Tis Union and Order that render men capable of making a vigorous defence, and that raiſe them above the fears of an Enemy, that are ſuperior in Number, but ſtrangers to Diſcipline and Agreement. When

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a Church of Christ maintains the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, she is not only fair as the Moon, and clear as the Sun, but terrible as an Army with Banners. How reasonable therefore is it that we pursue the things that make for Peace, that we * *sacrifice all private Animosities and Discords to the Publick Good*, than which nothing can more contribute to our lasting Settlement, so as to render us firm and unshaken as a Rock.

(3.) The pursuit of Peace and Union will recommend our Holy Religion, and bring Honour to Jesus the Head of it. 'Tis very remarkable, that when our Blessed Saviour had pray'd for the Union of his People, he pleads this Argument with his Father, *Let them be one, that the World may believe that thou hast sent me.* Joh. 17. 21. Again, *Let them be perfect in one, that the World may know that thou hast sent me.* Ver. 23. Now that which does any way prove or illustrate Christ's coming forth from the Father, is proper to recommend Christianity to the World; and the *Union of Christians*, in the judgment of our Saviour, is proper for this end. When we *follow the things that make for Peace*, we adorn that Holy Religion we profess, as well as evidence to the World that we belong to that Jesus who is the Prince of Peace: *By this* (says our Saviour) *shall all men know that you are my Disciples, if you love one another.* Love is the distinguishing Badg, the discriminating Mark of a true Disciple of Jesus. The Disciples of other Institutions among the Jews, as well as Heathens, used to distinguish themselves by some pecu-

* Donare inimicitias Reip. *was the Advice of the antient* Romans *for the security of their Civil State.*

liar Opinion, or ſingular Habit, or ſlight Ceremony. But our Lord fixes on ſomething that is moſt excellent in it ſelf, and uſeful to others, as the diſtinguiſhing Character of his Diſciples, *viz. Love*; which, as one well expreſſes it, is the moſt *human*, and the moſt *divine* Quality of which we are capable.

Now what a reproach is it to Chriſtianity, when ſuch as call themſelves the Diſciples of the Prince of Peace, act like the Sons of Strife! There is not any thing that does more miſchief in the world than Diviſion amongſt Chriſtians: for it keeps good Men out of the Church, and hardens wicked Men in their Sins. 'Tis ſtoried of *Alexander Severus*, that ſeeing two Chriſtians at variance one with the other, he forbad them any longer to aſſume the Name of Chriſtians, becauſe by their Strife and Contention they diſhonour'd their Lord and Maſter. Certainly were Chriſtians but ſenſible what miſchief they do Religion by their Diſcords, they would mourn over them, and vigorouſly purſue *the things that make for Peace*. All our Diſcourſes about Religion will not ſo effectually recommend it, as our *walking in Love*. There are a thouſand ſecret and powerful Charms in Charity, that take faſt hold of mens Hearts, and inſenſibly, but effectually, attract their Love and Eſteem. Charity in its Exerciſes, is like the *Ointment of the right hand* that cannot be hid; the Perfume will diffuſe and ſpread it ſelf in Converſation.

(4.) Another Advantage that will enſue on the due performance of the Duty I am recommending, is the Encreaſe and Edification of the Church. The Primitive Churches were at peace within themſelves, when they had reſt

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from the Perſecution of their Enemies; and that was the happy ſeaſon of their Edification and Growth. *Then had the Churches reſt throughout all* Judea, *and* Galilee, *and* Samaria, *and were edified; and walking in the Fear of the Lord, and Comfort of the Holy Ghoſt, were multiplied.* Thoſe within the Sacred Incloſure were *built up in their moſt holy Faith*; and many of thoſe that were without, beholding the good Agreement and Order of thoſe within, were encourag'd to coaleſce with them. Then it was that Converts flock'd to the Houſe of God, *as Doves to their Windows*; ſo vaſt an acceſſion was there of Members to the Chriſtian Church. And if we of this Age would have the Borders of *Sion* enlarg'd, and thoſe within the Pale of the Church edified, we muſt *follow the things that make for Peace.* Iſa. 60. 8.

What Edification can be expected in that Society, which is made the very *Seat of Contention?* But where a Church is under the charming influence of a Spirit of Love, the Members will mutually perform for each other all good Offices; they'l ſympathize with one another under their various Trials, rejoice with thoſe that rejoice, and weep with thoſe that weep. They'l be ready to counſel and adviſe one another, and, when there is occaſion, make uſe of friendly Reproof to each other. Moreover, that Charity which flames in their Breaſts, will engage them to uſe the moſt courteous and obliging Deportment; ſo that they'l endeavour to overcome every thing that ſtands in the way of Peace, or that may abate the Exerciſes of Love. This excellent Temper of Mind will in a great meaſure prevent both our giving and taking Offence; for we ſhall be ready

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ready to put the moſt candid Interpretation on one another's Words and Actions; and when Offences come, Charity will diſpoſe us to a mutual Forgiveneſs, and engage us to pray one for another. Now all theſe things have a tendency to the edification of the Church, and prepare the way for it. In a word, if the Security and Defence, if the Glory and Honour, if the Increaſe and Edification of the Church, accompanied with a rational and real Pleaſure, are Advantages that attend the Duty I have been recommending; then ſurely 'tis highly reaſonable that we comply with the Advice of the Apoſtle in the Text, to *follow the things that make for Peace.* But,

Thirdly, I am to inſtance in ſome of thoſe things that make for the Peace of the Churches of Jeſus Chriſt. And in order to this, we muſt carefully avoid whatever may ſtir up Strife and Diſcord. The Apoſtle *James* points out the Source and Spring of our Contentions. *From whence come Wars and Fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your Luſts that war in your Members?* We muſt not indulge any Luſt, or diſorderly Paſſion, if we would promote Peace in the Churches of the Saints. Whatever we do, let us avoid Pride, which is generally at the bottom of moſt of thoſe Diviſions that are amongſt Chriſtians. When there was a ſtrife among the Diſciples of our Lord, 'twas who ſhould be the greateſt. Prov. 13. 10. And the Wiſe-Man has told us, That *only by Pride cometh Contention*; *i. e.* chiefly and principally this has one of the greateſt hands in our Diſcords and Animoſities, and is there-

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fore to be ſuppreſs'd and avoided. In ſhort, let us lay aſide all Envy and Malice, Covetouſneſs and Revenge, inordinate Self-Love, and evil Surmiſing, all which have a natural tendency to Strife and Confuſion. Now to procure and perpetuate Peace and Union, there are theſe ſeveral things I would recommend to your ſerious conſideration.

1. Let all that labour in the Word and Doctrine amongſt us, endeavour after Union and a good Correſpondence. If there be no good Underſtanding amongſt the Miniſters of Chriſt, no wonder if there be Factions among the People, as there were in the *Corinthian* Church: One was for *Paul*, and another for *Apollos*, a third for *Cephas*. Now this the Apoſtle urges againſt them as a ſad but ſure Sign of their Carnality; and if there was leſs of this ſenſual Spirit among Chriſtians now, the Edification and Increaſe of the Church would be more remarkable. Therefore if we would obtain Peace, and walk in Love, one way to compaſs ſo deſirable an End, is to cultivate an Acquaintance and good Underſtanding amongſt the Miniſters of Chriſt. 'Tis not likely there ſhould be much Peace in the Churches, while the Intereſt of the Miniſters is divided. If we look ſhy on one another, and keep at a diſtance with a forbidding Air, our People that are generally more influenced by Example than Precept, will rather be factious than follow the things that make for Peace. My Brethren, God has honour'd ſeveral of you by putting you into the Miniſtry: Will you ſuffer me to prevail on you to be of one heart, and one way, that we may ſerve the Lord with one conſent,

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ſtriving together as one Man for the Faith of the Goſpel, continually provoking one another to Love and good Works.

2. Let both Miniſters and People endeavour to live in the continual exerciſe of thoſe Virtues that have a ſpecial tendency to Union and Concord. The higher our Attainments are in Grace, the more ſtrict and intimate will be our Union. *Have Salt in your ſelves* (ſays our Saviour) *and have Peace one with another.* In which words our Lord ſeems to intimate, that ſo long as People retain a true ſavour of Divine things, and continue in the exerciſe of Grace, it will be a proper means to promote Union and Peace among Chriſtians. Let us be much in the exerciſe of Humility and Meekneſs; for if *in lowlineſs of mind each would eſteem others better than themſelves*, it would wonderfully promote Peace in all Chriſtian Societies. 'Tis *he that is of a proud heart that ſtirreth up ſtrife*; Strife is the natural Off-ſpring of Pride, but Peace is the genuine Iſſue of Humility. So for the exerciſe of Patience and Self-denial, if we had but learn'd to bear and forbear, to deny our ſelves in things lawful rather than ſcandalize a weak Chriſtian; then Peace, that ſeems to be baniſh'd from ſome Societies, would return, revive and flouriſh. What is it that ſome People will not deny themſelves, under the Influence of Ambition and Popularity! Some have parted with their Lives for the Good of their Country; others for the ſake of a Minion, and to prepare their way for impure Embraces, have waſted their Eſtates, proſtituted their Honour, hazarded their Health, ſhipwreck'd their Conſciences, and for-

Mark 9. 50.

Phil. 2. 3.

Prov. 28. 25.

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forfeited their Salvation: And ſhall not a true Principle of Charity, agreeable to right Reaſon and divine Revelation, enforc'd with the ſtrongeſt Motives, make us willing to deny our own Humours, to promote the publick Good? What tho Chriſtians of the ſame Society differ from us in things of an indifferent nature, yet they agree with us in Matters of the higheſt conſequence. *Therefore whereunto we have already attain'd, let us walk by the ſame Rule, let us mind the ſame thing.*

3. Let us endeavour to give an early ſtop to thoſe things that are likely to make a breach upon Unity and Order. This is agreeable to the Advice of the Wiſe-Man, who aſſures us, that *the beginning of Strife is as when one letteth out Water: Therefore* (ſays he) *leave off Contention before it be meddled with.* Prov. 17. 14. No ſooner is the Bank of a River broken, but the Water will ſpread, and carry all before it with an irreſiſtible violence. When Paſſions begin to riſe, 'tis the beſt way immediately to ſuppreſs 'em, becauſe no one can tell how far they ſhall be carried, nor into what Indecencies men may be tranſported by giving way to Wrath. 'Tis certainly the moſt prudent courſe to avoid the occaſions of Strife, and very early to reſiſt every thing that has any viſible tendency towards it. How great Miſchiefs, and what lamentable Diviſions have been occaſion'd by very ſmall beginnings of Contention! The little Heterogeneous Vapours which the Sun exhales from the Earth, often deſcend in Tempeſt and Thunder; ſo, ſmall Differences heightned by Pride, fall in a mighty Storm, and ſpread Confuſion and Diſorder, where once nothing but

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but Love and Peace reign'd. *How great a matter* (ſays the Apoſtle *James*) *does a little Fire kindle!* A few Sparks ſtruck into a Magazine, ſhall inſtantly blow up and tear all in pieces. A ſcornful Look, or an unhandſom Reflection, if not preſently and prudently corrected, may lay a Foundation for innumerable Miſchiefs. Therefore if we have any real regard to the Peace of the Church, let us abſtain from the very appearance of thoſe things that
Eph. 4. 8. tend to Diſſenſion: *And above all things have fervent Charity among your ſelves; for Charity ſhall cover the multitude of Sins.*

4. Let us manage all our Religious Affairs with Wiſdom and Innocency. 'Twas the Direction given by our Bleſſed Saviour, when he ſent forth his Diſciples into an ill-natur'd
Mat. 10. 16. World, *That they ſhould be wiſe as Serpents, and harmleſs as Doves.* Alas! 'tis impoſſible that a good Correſpondence ſhould be kept up in any Society without Foreſight and Caution, Innocence and Integrity. A juſt mixture of Wiſdom and Uprightneſs in the Conduct of Chriſtians, will lay a Foundation for a laſting Peace. 'Twas an excellent Character one of the * Antients gave of his Father, *viz. That he neither ſuffer'd the Wiſdom of the Serpent to degenerate into Cunning, nor the Innocency of the Dove into Indiſcretion; but made up one compleat kind of Virtue from the mixture of both together.* Chriſtianity indulges no *pious Frauds*, nor will the excellent Inſtitution of the Goſpel allow men to do the leaſt Evil, tho on pretence of procuring the greateſt Good: And

* Greg. Nazianzen. *Orat.* 19.

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that Wisdom which our Blessed Saviour recommends, is of a Divine Original, and in its Exercises must be always agreeable to the simplicity of the Gospel. To which purpose, the Apostle *James* speaks most directly; *The Wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.* Jam. 3. 17. A Vein of Sincerity must run thro whole the Series of a Man's Actions, or else what he calls *prudent Management*, will appear to others no better than *Subtilty* and *Craft*; and that will raise a thousand Jealousies in the minds of People, and prepare the way for Strife. No doubt but it's very lawful, and very necessary to act with the highest Discretion and Wisdom in all Ecclesiastical Matters; but under that pretext, we must be very cautious of doing any thing that is inconsistent with downright Honesty: Let us be wise, but innocent in our Conduct, if we would promote Peace in the Churches of God.

5. In all our Conferences about Religious Matters, and those Affairs that relate to the Churches of Jesus Christ, let us use soft and inoffensive Language. Sharp and indecent Reflections may separate real Friends, but will never reconcile contending Parties. Men of Sense may be wrought upon by the Power of Reason, and the Dint of Argument; but they'l never be rail'd out of their Prejudices, if they have unhappily imbib'd any. 'Tis in vain for People to pretend that their Zeal for things Sacred warms 'em: when their Passions kindle and tumultuate, and they reproach their Brethren, 'tis certainly an unhallowed

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hallowed Flame. Our Zeal for Religion muſt be always regulated by it; and when 'tis ſo, it will be accompany'd with the *Fruits of the Spirit*, ſuch as *Love*, *Joy*, *Peace*, *Long-ſuffering*, *Gentleneſs*, *Goodneſs*, *Faith*, *Meekneſs*, *Temperance*. Do we not profeſs to be the Subjects of the Prince of Peace? and does not ſuch a Profeſſion involve in it an Obligation to imitate his bright Example, who had the moſt eaſy and charming Addreſs, and inſtructed thoſe with Meekneſs that oppoſed themſelves? He did never render Railing for Railing, but contrariwiſe Bleſſing; and accordingly has enjoin'd his Followers to *bleſs them that curſe 'em*. How much rather ſhould thoſe that join with us in the ſame Prayers and Sacraments, be treated with civil and inoffenſive Language? What then ſhall we ſay of that Satir ſome vent on their Brethren? Is it not more agreeable to the Stage than the Church? and does it not ſavour more of the Spirit that is from beneath, than of that which is from above? Ought it not then to be diſcountenanc'd and ſuppreſs'd? The uſe of opprobrious Language is like ſhooting of Arrows dipt in Poiſon; or, to uſe the Expreſſion of the Wiſe-Man, 'tis *throwing about Firebrands, Arrows and Death*, which wound him moſt that throws them. I have read of a ſort of Creatures, the more they ſting, the leſs they hurt; I have thought they reſemble thoſe People that conſtantly make uſe of ill Language in Religious Controverſies, which always does leſs hurt to their Adverſaries than themſelves. A Flint is ſooner broke on a Pillow than on an Anvil: ſo Men of the moſt obſtinate Humours are more eaſily melted by mild and ſoft

Gal. 5. 22.

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ſoft Language, than by that which is bitter and cenſorious. And let us remember, *That the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteouſneſs of God.* It may kindle an impure Fire without Light, and you well know what kind of Fire that does reſemble. Suppoſe the Chriſtian I differ with is miſtaken, yet if I endeavour to expoſe his Error with a raſh and intemperate Zeal, with rude and uncivil Language, 'Tis (as one expreſſes it) *as if a Man ſhould be more concern'd for a miſplac'd Hair on another's Head, than for a fiery Ulcer in his own Breaſt:* For certainly my paſſionate Raillery is a greater fault than the Error I would expoſe.

My Brethren, tho the Cauſe we plead for be very good, and the Adverſaries we argue againſt extremely bad, yet we are more oblig'd to uſe ſoft and good Language. The Inſtance we have in the Epiſtle of *Jude*, is not improper on this occaſion. Michael *the Archangel, when contending with the Devil, he diſputed about the Body of* Moſes, *durſt not bring againſt him a railing Accuſation, but ſaid, The Lord rebuke thee.* Why durſt not this excellent Spirit rail at the Devil in his diſpute with him? Some think becauſe the Devil would have been too hard for him at railing; but the true reaſon, I apprehend, was this, That railing would have been very unſutable to the Character of a holy Angel, and very diſhonourable to that God whoſe Miniſter he was. Now if our holy Religion will not permit us to rail, even at the Devil himſelf; if it be a misbecoming thing to revile a fallen Spirit, how criminal is it to uſe opprobrious and ill Language to our Brethren? Indeed the Apoſtle adviſes, that *unruly and vain Talkers* ſhould be *rebuk'd ſharply.* Jude 9. Tit. 1. 10, 13.

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Convince them powerfully; let your cloſe reaſoning lay open their faults, and ſpeak plainly to 'em. *Rem ipſam dic, mitte malè loqui; ſay the thing, but uſe no bad Language.* If we have any value for the Churches Peace, we muſt in all Religious Conferences obſerve the decorum of good Language. 'Twas a fine Character given of one of the *Romans*, *Neſcivit quid eſſet malè dicere: He knew not what it was to give bad Language.* I wiſh the Character had agreed better to the generality of Chriſtians, and that the Apoſtle's Advice had been taken by them; *Give none offence, neither to the* 1 Cor. 10. 32. *Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God.*

6. If we would preſerve Union and a good Correſpondence among the Churches of Chriſt, great care muſt be taken that we do not violate or infringe that Form of Diſcipline conſtituted by our Saviour: There muſt be the utmoſt caution us'd in an orderly receiving, and a regular diſmiſſion of Members. No Church ought to give count enance to thoſe who have cauſeleſly and ſchiſmatically rent themſelves from an orderly Church of Jeſus Chriſt, or that have been righteouſly excluded their Communion for Hereſy or Immorality. For that Church that will venture to receive Perſons under a juſt Cenſure, does not only encroach on the Privilege of another Church, but in ſo acting uſurps a Supremacy over it. 'Tis too notorious to be conceal'd, how great Confuſion has been made in the Chriſtian World by the Arrogancy of the Biſhop of *Rome*, and by the Church of *Rome*'s pretending to be the only true Church in the World. How little ground ſhe has for this claim, I need not ſay, when ſo many of the Characters of a falſe Church exactly

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exactly agree to her. As an aſſuming Spirit has a tendency to Strife where it appears in ſingle Perſons, ſo it manifeſtly leads to Diſſenſion where a Community of Men are under its influence. Therefore if we would have Peace flouriſh in the Churches, let not one Church pretend to an Authority over another; but let every truly conſtituted Church of Jeſus Chriſt enjoy her freedom in Eccleſiaſtical Adminiſtrations, according to the Order Chriſt has eſtabliſh'd in his Houſe.

7. Let us ſend up our united Cries to Heaven for the Spirit of Love, and of a ſound Mind. God has all Hearts in his hands, and can turn them as the Rivers of Water. How ſuddenly did he cure the Diſorders of *Eſau*'s Spirit, and of an Enemy made him a Friend! Our God is a God of Peace, and 'tis only He that can *create Peace, and make* Jeruſalem *a quiet Habitation.* Let us therefore, with the Pſalmiſt, *pray for the Peace of* Jeruſalem. With what fervour did the Apoſtle pray for the *Theſſalonians* on this very account! *The Lord of Peace give you Peace always by all means.* 2 Theſſ. 3. 16. Now to encourage our earneſt Addreſſes, God has promis'd, *That he will turn to his People a pure Language, that they may all call upon the Name of the Lord, to ſerve him with one conſent.* He has alſo aſſur'd us, that he *will give his People one Heart, and one Way.* Jer. 32. 39. Now ſuch Promiſes we ſhould plead with him in Prayer. When the *Iſraelites* attempted to engage God on their ſide, they agreed together as one Man to ask his Counſel; *Then all the Children of* Iſrael *went out, and the Congregation was gathered together as one Man, from* Dan *even to* Beerſheba, *with the Land of* Gilead, *unto the* Judg. 20. 1.

Lord in Mizpeh. I would hope that all thoſe who are aſſembled here on this ſolemn Occaſion, are in the ſame diſpoſition of mind; and that our united Cries put up to the Father of Mercies by the hands of a Mediator, will obtain for us all neceſſary and agreeable Supplies. I doubt not you are ſenſible, that the Succeſs of our Endeavours for the good of the Churches depends on God Almighty. Whatever Methods we fall upon will be ineffectual, unleſs He proſper and ſucceed 'em. The Cure of the Diviſions that may ariſe in any Church, can be only by the God of Peace; let us therefore pray, *That* Ephraim *may not envy* Judah, *nor* Judah *vex* Ephraim: and as many as join with us in ſuch Petitions, *Peace be on them, and Mercy on the* Iſrael *of God.*

I proceed now to the *laſt* general Head, which is to improve the whole.

Firſt, Let us labour to be thorowly ſenſible wherein we have been defective in the diſcharge of that great Duty that has been recommended to us. Let us mourn over our own Defects, and the Churches Diviſions. You have heard how reaſonable the Duty of following the things that make for Peace, is in it ſelf, and what great Obligations we are under to comply with it: Surely the ſenſe of having been deficient therein ſhould ſtrike us with a due Concern; we ſhould lay our mouths in the Duſt, if ſo there may be hope, that the Church's Peace may be yet as the River, and her Righteouſneſs as the Waves of the Sea. There is too much cauſe to fear that we have not all of us done our utmoſt to procure and perpetuate the Peace of the Churches:

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ches: Have not the Strong ſcandaliz'd the Weak, and the Weak been too free in cenſuring the Strong? whereas the Apoſtle ſays, *If it be poſſible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all Men.* Now have we not neglected what we might poſſibly have done? Therefore let us lay our hands upon our hearts, and with ſhame and pungent ſorrow acknowledg our Guilt in the above-mention'd reſpect. The Apoſtle tells us, *that where envying and ſtrife is, there is confuſion, and every evil work:* than which nothing can do more hurt to Chriſtianity, or more hinder its progreſs. Therefore *Julian* the Apoſtate, who treated the Chriſtian Inſtitution with the greateſt ſpite, thought he could not take a more effectual way to hinder the ſpreading of the Goſpel, than by keeping up the Diviſions in that time betwixt the Catholicks and Donatiſts. The Goſpel might have a freer courſe, were it not for the Diviſions that are among Chriſtians. Let us be ſenſible of our folly, and above all things let us put on Charity; for a weak Chriſtian by the exerciſe of that Grace, ſhall more remarkably adorn the Doctrine of God his Saviour, than a Perſon of greater Knowledg and leſs Charity.

Secondly, Let both Miniſters and People follow the things that make for Peace, and thoſe things whereby we may edify one another. Tho Peace ſhould flee from us, yet we ſhould follow it with the greateſt vigor. Διώκωμεν, the word uſed in the Text, ſignifies to purſue a thing eagerly as Hunters do their Prey. Therefore that this Exhortation may be ſucceſsful, I ſhall ſubmit to your ſerious Thoughts the following things.

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1. Conſider, that unleſs a Man be of a peaceable and charitable Temper, the higheſt profeſſion of Religion is inſignificant and vain. Let a Man make ever ſuch pretences concerning his cloſe adherence to the Duties of the firſt Table, if he does not perform thoſe of the ſecond, he's no better than a hypocritical Pretender. That Man has no true Love to God, whoſe Heart is void of Charity to his Brother. And ſo much is concluded
1 John 4.20. in the Apoſtle's Argument; *If a man ſay, I love God, and hate his Brother, he is a Lyar. For he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen?* The ſame Apoſtle inſtances in Brotherly Love,
1 John 3.14. as the true mark of a Chriſtian. *We know* (ſays he) *that we are paſſed from Death to Life, becauſe we love the Brethren.* How high ſoever ſome riſe in the Profeſſion of Religion, yet if they are ſtrangers to the exerciſe of Cha-
1 Cor. 13.1, 2, 3. rity, their Religion is vain. *Tho I ſpeak* (ſays the Apoſtle) *with the Tongues of Men and Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as a ſounding Braſs, or a tinkling Cymbal. And tho I have the Gift of Prophecy, and underſtand all Myſteries, and all Knowledg; and tho I have all Faith, ſo that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing. And tho I beſtow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and tho I give my Body to be burn'd, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing.*

2. Conſider that a charitable and peaceable Temper carries with it its own Reward, as I have hinted under a former Head. Love is the moſt eaſy Paſſion, and affords the greateſt Pleaſure; whereas Wrath and Strife, Animoſity and Diſcord, Envy and Revenge, are the Works

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Works of the Fleſh, and a Puniſhment to thoſe that indulge them. Malicious and revengeful Men are like the troubled Sea that cannot reſt, but perpetually caſts up mire and dirt But the man that is of a charitable diſpoſition, and follows the things that make for Peace, is encompaſs'd with a thouſand advantages, being expreſly brought within the compaſs of one of the Beatitudes: *Bleſſed are the Peace-makers; for they ſhall be called the Children of God.* In a word, if it be poſſible for any Man to have a taſte of the Pleaſures of Paradiſe in this waſte and howling Wilderneſs, it muſt be that Perſon who loves his Brethren with a pure Heart fervently: for ſuch a one *dwelleth in Love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him; for God is Love.* Mat. 5. 1 John 4. 16.

3. Conſider that our Bleſſed Lord but a little before his Death pray'd for that which I am now preſſing upon you, namely, Union and Concord: *Holy Father, keep through thine own Name thoſe whom thou haſt given me, that they may be one, as we are one.* Our Bleſſed Saviour was not ſo ſollicitous that his People might be kept from the Perſecution of their Enemies, as that there might be a firm Union and good Correſpondence amongſt themſelves, well-knowing how much that would contribute to their eſtabliſhment and growth. Our Lord in his Diſcourſes does compare his People to Creatures of the moſt innocent and inoffenſive nature, ſuch as Doves, Lambs, and Sheep; and ſometimes he compares them to little Children, that have no confirm'd Prejudices againſt any; to ſignify, to be ſure, that ſuch as claim any alliance with him, ſhould be the Sons of Peace. Now certainly what our John 17. 11.

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Saviour pray'd for, as it were with his dying breath, for the Diſciples of his Croſs, ſhould be endeavour'd after by all that pretend to ſubmit to his Scepter; eſpecially conſidering 'twas one end of his Death: *And having made Peace through the Blood of his Croſs, by him to reconcile all things unto himſelf; by him, I ſay, whether they be things in Earth, or things in Heaven.*

Col. 1. 10.

4. Let the Conſideration of the Union that there is amongſt evil Spirits, and in a falſe Church, be a means to provoke us to follow the things that make for Peace, who profeſs to adhere to the Reform'd Churches. There is a kind of Union and Confederacy in the Kingdom of Darkneſs: The fallen Angels unite their joint endeavours to break the Peace of the Church, and ſo can wicked Men. *Gebal* and *Ammon*, *Amalek*, and the Men of *Tyre* did all conſpire againſt *Iſrael.*

Pſal. 83. 12.

They can agree in Miſchief, tho they hate one another: their Confederacy (as one obſerves) is like *Sampſon*'s Foxes; tho their Faces look'd ſeveral ways, being ty'd tail to tail, yet they could run together, and ſet the Corn on fire. And 'tis very remarkable, that *Herod* and *Pilate*, tho at great variance, could be Friends at a day's warning, when Chriſt was to be crucify'd.

'Tis notoriouſly evident, that there are wide Differences in the Church of *Rome*. How great Controverſies have there been between the *Janſeniſts* and the *Jeſuits*, between the *Franciſcans* and the *Dominicans?* With what warmth has one of theſe Parties contended for the immaculate Conception of the Virgin *Mary*, which the other, tho of the ſame Communion,

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nion, has as hotly oppos'd? How great Diſputes alſo have there been betwixt the *Gallican* Church, and thoſe that are more enſlav'd to the Biſhop of *Rome* in *Italy* and *Spain?* I might alſo mention the Secular and Regular Prieſts, whoſe Differences have not been ſmall; yet all theſe contending Parties can as one Man agree to carry on their common Intereſt, and unite in their Subjection to Antichriſt their common Head. * *It's lawful to learn from an Enemy.* May our Enemies provoke us to Charity, and quicken us in the purſuit of thoſe things that make for Peace.

5. Conſider it will not be long, and all thoſe things that try our Patience and diſorder our Paſſions, will end. This is the Apoſtle's Motive: *Let your Moderation be known to all men,* Phil. 4. 5. *for the Lord is at hand.* Would any of you be found by Chriſt under the heighth of Diſorder and Paſſion, contending and quarrelling with your Brethren? Or would you not rather *be found of Chriſt in Peace*; not only in a ſtate of Reconciliation with God, but in Charity with one another? 'Tis but a little time that we can be ſerviceable to each other; therefore whatſoever our hand findeth to do, that may be for God's Glory and the Peace of the Churches, let us do it with all our might; for there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledg in the Grave.

We have Work of the higheſt importance on our hands, let us not waſte the little time we have to do it in. 'Twas a cutting Reproof which the Mariners gave the Philoſopher, who would have entertain'd them with an imperti-

* ——Fas eſt & ab Hoſte doceri.

nent

nent Harangue in the midſt of a Storm; *We periſh*, ſay they, *whilſt thou trifleſt*. All our warm Diſputes about indifferent things, are but induſtrious Trifling.

Let us therefore mind the one thing neceſſary, and work the Works of him that ſent us, while it's call'd to day, becauſe the Night is haſtning wherein no man can work.

Laſtly, Let us often think of the glorious and bleſſed Place whither we all profeſs to be going; I mean Heaven: where there is not one Perſon that ſighs, weeps, or complains. Above there are no Hurries and Confuſions, no Piques or Animoſities, but Peace and Joy in their utmoſt perfection. Clouds and Tempeſts are form'd in the lower Region of the Air; all above is calm and ſerene. Here the Church is militant within it ſelf, but hereafter it ſhall triumph in an everlaſting Peace. Let us have our Converſation in Heaven, that we may more reſemble the Temper of the Bleſſed while we are upon Earth.

Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jeſus, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the everlaſting Covenant, make you perfect in every good Work, to do his Will, working in you that which is well-pleaſing in his ſight through Jeſus Chriſt; To whom be Glory and Dominion: And let all the Churches ſay Amen.

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A

SERMON

PREACH'D

The *7th* of *September*, 1704.

BEING THE

Solemn Thankſgiving-Day

FOR THE

Late Glorious Victory obtain'd over the *French* and *Bavarians* at *Bleinheim* near *Hochſtet*, on Wedneſday the ſecond of *Auguſt*, by the Forces of Her Majeſty and Her Allies, under the Command of his Grace the Duke of MARLBOROUGH.

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PSALM CL. 2.

Praiſe Him for his Mighty Acts.

THE admirable Traces of an Infinite Wiſdom and Power, which we diſcern in the Formation of various Creatures that inhabit this Earth, are ſuch a Proof of a Deity, that a Man may as reaſonably doubt whether he exiſts himſelf, as call in queſtion the Being of a God. Now next to the Acknowledgment of a Deity, is the owning that the ſame excellent Being governs the World; for there is a neceſſary Connection betwixt the Belief of a God and a Providence. 'Tis as unreaſonable to think that all things in this World happen by Chance, as to affirm that a fortuitous Concourſe of Atoms ſtretch'd forth the Heavens, and laid the Foundations of the Earth. As the Power and Wiſdom of an inviſible Deity are manifeſted by the things that are made, ſo are the ſame Perfections wonderfully diſplay'd in the Government of the ſame things: one Branch of which Divine Adminiſtration conſiſts in preſerving the

the Creatures that are form'd; it being impoſſible they ſhould have any Principle of Self-ſubſiſtence independent on their firſt Cauſe: for 'tis incompatible with the nature of a Creature, to be independent. Now as the unlimited Power of God is neceſſary to *uphold all things*, ſo is his infinite Wiſdom to direct and guide them. 'Tis not ſullen Fate nor giddy Chance, but a wiſe and a powerful Deity that holds the Reins of Government; all the Creatures and all their Actions are under the wiſe and righteous Management of Heaven.

No Succeſs can attend the Affairs of a private Perſon, or the Arms of a publick Community, but 'tis owing to the Influence of Providence: So that the Victories ſome People attribute to the Favours of Fortune, Reaſon it ſelf directs us to aſcribe to the Hand of God, and to number them among *thoſe Mighty Acts* the Royal Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of in the Text, and for which he exhorts us to *praiſe God*.

For tho God's raiſing the beautiful Frame of the World, and furniſhing it with noble and excellent Creatures, may very well be accounted amongſt his *Mighty Acts*; yet I apprehend that the *Mighty Acts* mention'd in the Text, do principally refer to thoſe ſurprizing Occurrences in the Divine Oeconomy, wherein the Wiſdom, Power and Goodneſs of God have been moſt eminently diſplay'd in behalf of the Church. For the Pſalmiſt had in the Verſe before the Text ſignify'd that we ſhould praiſe God in the Firmament of his Power, *i. e.* for the Works of Creation, whereof Heaven is the chief: he then immediately ſubjoins, *Praiſe him for his Mighty Acts*; *i. e.* his Providential Acts: in which ſenſe the moſt learned

learned and judicious Ineerpreters agree.

The Obſervation I deſign to ſpeak to from the Words, is this, *viz.*

That the Mighty Acts God hath wrought in the Courſe of his Providence on the behalf of his People, lay them under very great Obligations to praiſe him.

In ſpeaking to this Argument it will be neceſſary,

Firſt, To lay down ſome preliminary Propoſitions by way of Diſtinction and Explication, with reſpect to the Mighty Acts of Divine Providence.

Secondly, To ſhew you what is comprehended in our praiſing of God.

Thirdly, To diſcourſe of the great Obligations we are under to praiſe God for the Mighty Acts of his Providence.

Fourthly, To improve the Whole, ſutable to the ſolemn and joyful Occaſion of our preſent Meeting.

Firſt, I am to lay down ſome preliminary Propoſitions by way of Diſtinction and Explication, with reſpect to the Mighty Acts of Divine Providence; which may be conſider'd as *Common*, *Miraculous*, and *Special*.

1. There are the Common Acts of Divine Providence, which we ought not to paſs over without ſtrict Obſervation. I mean thoſe that have occur'd in every Age ſince the Creation of the World, and do every day afford matter for Inquiry and Notice: Such as the regular Motion of the Heavenly Bodies in a due Diſtance, ſo as not to depopulate the Earth, and render it unfruitful; the orderly Succeſſion of

Seed-

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Gen. 8. 22. *Seed-time and Harveſt, of Cold and Heat, of Summer and Winter, of Day and Night:* Theſe all proclaim the Perfections of the Godhead, and are a Demonſtration of a Divine Superintendency. Pſal. 74. And I obſerve, the Royal Pſalmiſt recites the like Inſtances as Proofs of a Providence. How ſoon would the Harmony of the Creation be broken, and this beautiful World turn'd into a deform'd Chaos, did not God by his irreſiſtible Power and infinite Wiſdom animate, influence, guide, and on fit occaſions reſtrain the vaſt number of diſtinct Beings that are in the upper and lower World?

The *Epicureans* imagin'd that God did not govern the World, becauſe the difficulty of ſuch an Adminiſtration would leſſen his Greatneſs, and interrupt his Felicity. Theſe People had very mean and low Thoughts of the Majeſty of Heaven, who concluded that becauſe human Conſtitutions are not manag'd without great trouble and fatigue, therefore God himſelf cannot govern the Univerſe without labour and toil. An Inference very abſurd; for there's no compariſon betwixt an ignorant and feeble Creature, and an Omniſcient and Almighty Creator; who as he ſees all things paſt, preſent, and to come, at one view, ſo he can accompliſh any thing by one Act of his Will, without the leaſt Interruption of his Happineſs. 2 Chron. 16. 9. *The Eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole Earth.* Pſal. 33. 13, 15. *He looketh from Heaven, and beholdeth all the Sons of Men. He faſhioneth their Hearts alike, and conſidereth all their Works.* There is no Event ſo great, but 'tis under the Divine Government; no Creature ſo mean, but it comes

comes within the compaſs of the Divine Care: for the Providence of God reaches from the higheſt Angel to the meaneſt Inſect. 'Twas an abſurd Concluſion of the *Syrians*, *That the Lord was a God of the Hills, but not of the Valleys*; tho 'twas not unlike the Notion of ſome of the antient Philoſophers and Poets, about the Limitation of Providence to the great Affairs of the World, and that God is an unconcern'd Spectator in leſſer things. *The Gods*, ſays one of 'em, *overlook ſmaller matters, and do not mind every man's little Field and Vine.* 1 Kings 20. 28.

But we have a very different account of the Extent of God's Providence from Divine Revelation, which aſſures us that it reaches even to the *Graſs of the Field, which to day is, and to morrow is caſt into the Oven*; yea, *to the very Hairs of our Head, which are all number'd*; tho they are inconſiderable, even to a Proverb. Now if it was not inconſiſtent with the Wiſdom and other Perfections of the Divine Nature to form all Creatures, I cannot ſee how it ſhould reflect the leaſt Diſhonour on God's Attributes to govern what he has made. So that the *Mighty Acts* of common Providence in God's governing the World and its various Inhabitants, whether in Heaven or Earth, in the Air or in the Sea, deſerve ſerious Reflection and conſtant Notice. And I confeſs, I cannot ſee upon what reaſon a man ſhould ſo much as deſire to continue in this World, who does not believe it to be under the Government of a wiſe and powerful Being: for if there is no Providence, and all things come by Chance, we cannot be ſecure for a moment. Which brings to my thoughts an Expreſſion of *Marcus Antoninus* the Philoſopher; *Who*,

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ſays he, *would live in a World uninhabited by the Gods and Providence?*

2. Some of the *Mighty Acts* of God's Providence are ſtrictly miraculous; I mean ſuch as are produc'd by a ſupernatural Power, and are evident to Senſe. And under this Head I rank ſuch Mighty Acts as theſe, *viz.*

The Deliverance of the Children of *Iſrael* at the Red Sea, at which time the Waters did not only divide, but ſtood on a heap, and were as a Wall on the Right Hand and on the Left, ſo that they walked thro the Sea upon dry ground. This Event can ſurely be reſolved into nothing ſhort of a ſupernatural Power, if we conſider what an infinite number of fluid Particles were pil'd up and reſtrain'd, till the People God deſign'd to ſave had paſs'd over the Sea. Under this Head I might alſo recite the miraculous Plagues that were brought on the *Egyptians*; ſuch as the turning Rivers into Blood, and the Duſt of the Ground into Lice; the groſs and palpable Darkneſs that continu'd for three days over the Land of *Egypt*, when at the ſame time the Children of *Iſrael* had Light in their Dwellings.

Again, I might mention that Series of Miracles with which the *Iſraelites* were attended in the Wilderneſs. How amazing was, it that *Moſes* ſhould ſplit a Rock by the gentle ſtroke of a Wand, and that there ſhould immediately guſh out Water enough to quench the Thirſt of five or ſix hundred thouſand men; and that this agreeable Stream ſhould continue to follow 'em thro the Wilderneſs! Not to mention the Showers of Quails, the raining of Manna, and the miraculous Preſervation of the latter by the ſide of the Ark from Age to Age:

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Age: together with what *Moſes* remarks, Deut. 29. 5. That in the ſpace of forty Years, in the Wilderneſs, neither their Clothes nor Shoes were decay'd.

Again, the going back of the Sun in *Hezekiah*'s time, was a miraculous Operation of the Divine Power; as was alſo the Sun's ſtanding ſtill upon *Gibeon*, and the Moon in the Valley of *Ajalon*, in the time of *Joſhua*, until the People had aveng'd themſelves upon their Enemies. The inſtance of *Shadrach*, *Meſhech*, and *Abednego*, is to be refer'd to this Head. Theſe three *Jews* refus'd to pay Divine Honour to an Idol, which ſo incens'd a proud and arbitrary Monarch, that he doom'd 'em to be burn'd alive; and in order to make the quicker diſpatch of them, commands that the Furnace into which they were to be caſt, ſhould be heated ſeven times hotter than it ordinarily was; and theſe men were to be bound hand and foot, with their uſual Habit about 'em, and thrown into the midſt of the fiery Furnace, the Heat of which was ſo violent (as the Sacred Text informs us) that it ſlew their deſign'd Executioners; but the Force of it was ſo abated to them, by a miraculous diſplay of Goodneſs and Power, that it only loos'd their Bonds, and ſet 'em at liberty to walk in the fiery Oven. The Miracle having convinc'd that idolatrous Prince of the Being of the True God, and of the Doctrine of the Divine Providence, he calls 'em forth; *And the Princes, Governours, and Captains, and the King's Counſellors being gathered together, ſaw theſe Men, upon whoſe Bodies the Fire had no power, nor was a Hair of their Head ſing'd, neither were their Coats changed,*

nor the Smell of Fire had paſſed on them. The amazing Deliverance of *Daniel*, when thrown into a Den of fierce and hungry Lions, ought to be number'd among thoſe *Mighty Acts* of Providence that are ſtrictly miraculous.

To theſe might be added the numerous Miracles of our Bleſſed Saviour and his Apoſtles, for the Eſtabliſhment and Confirmation of the Chriſtian Religion.

3. There are ſome *Mighty Acts* of Providence that are ſpecial and extraordinary, but yet are not ſtrictly miraculous; nor are they to be number'd amongſt thoſe Works of Providence that are common. And what Age or Place has not been favour'd with many of theſe? And were the Caſe to be put to particular Perſons, I doubt not but that ſeveral in this Aſſembly would acknowledg they have been often deliver'd by *Mighty Acts* of ſpecial Providence. And if private Perſons could be prevail'd with to record the ſignal Favours which they and their Friends have receiv'd from the Hand of God, I queſtion not but the frequent Reviews of ſuch a Memorial would furniſh them with abundance of Pleaſure, as well as adminiſter Support under new and unexpected Troubles. The Pſalmiſt, tho in ſuch deep Sorrow that he refus'd to be comforted, and under ſuch Agonies of Conſcience that he could neither ſleep nor ſpeak, and began to queſtion whether the Mercy and Faithfulneſs of God would not fail for ever; yet in all this diſtreſs betakes himſelf to the Practice I have juſt now recommended: *I will remember the Years of the Right Hand of the Moſt High. I will remember*, or *record*, as the word

Pſal. 77. 10, 11, 12.

word ſignifies, *the Works of the Lord: Surely I will remember thy Wonders of old. I will meditate alſo of all thy Works, and talk of thy Doings.* And this was not without good Succeſs: for in the very next Verſe he cries out, *Who is* Ver. 13. *ſo great a God as our God!* He can now put in his Claim, who but juſt before was doubting and deſpairing of the Favour and Faithfulneſs of God. But the ſpecial Providences I ſhall principally recite, are of a more extenſive aud publick Concern; and under this Head I rank ſuch Mighty Acts as theſe, *viz.*

The Deliverance of the *Jewiſh* Nation from the Maſſacre deſign'd by *Haman*, which had ſuch a Chain of ſurprizing Circumſtances, as plainly enough ſhow that it was brought about by a ſpecial Direction of God. The like may be ſaid concerning the Advancement of *Joſeph*, who notwithſtanding the Envy of his Brethren, the Malice of his Miſtreſs, and the Difficulties and Diſgrace that attended his unjuſt Impriſonment, was rais'd to the higheſt Dignity of a Subject, being ſecond in the Kingdom to *Pharaoh*.

Again, That *David* ſhould be taken from the Sheepfolds, and rais'd to a Throne: That *from following the Ewes great with Young, God* Pſal. 78. 70, *ſhould bring him to feed* Jacob *his People, and* Iſrael 71. *his Inheritance:* That a Man of ſo obſcure a Character, and of ſo mean an Imploy, ſhould marry a Princeſs of the Blood, and overcome the moſt amazing Difficulties, and conſequently eſcape the hands of his Father-in-Law, who deſign'd he ſhould fall a Victim to his Rage; can ſurely be aſcrib'd to nothing but the ſpecial Favour of Heaven. And as remarkable were the Providences that attended

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this Prince after his Acceſſion to the Throne; he became as famous in the Field as he was in the Temple: All which he aſcribes to the ſpecial Kindneſs of Heaven; for ſays he, *God teacheth my Hands to war, ſo that a Bow of Steel is broken by my Arms. Thou haſt alſo given me the ſhield of thy Salvation; and thy right Hand hath holden me up, and thy Gentleneſs hath made me great; thou haſt enlarged my ſteps under me, that my Feet did not ſlip. I have purſu'd mine Enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were conſum'd.*

Pſal. 18.

I might alſo inſtance in God's raiſing up of *Cyrus*, whoſe Preſervation, if circumſtanc'd as * *Juſtin* reports, was as extraordinary as his Atchievements: For tho he was expos'd as ſoon as born to the Mercy of wild Beaſts, the Providence of God ſo order'd it, that a brute Animal gave Nouriſhment to the helpleſs Infant, and defended him from the Beaſts and Birds. The poor Shepherd, who had been employ'd in this barbarous Work of expoſing the Infant, had his Pity excited by the Tenderneſs of a Brute, and immediately takes up the Child and carries it to his Cottage, where it was bred up; Divine Providence guarding him, till from a poor Shepherd's Boy, he became the Prince of a mighty Empire: and after ſeveral Victories, and the dethroning of his Grandfather *Aſtyages*, who order'd him to be ſent out of the World as ſoon as he came into it, leſt he ſhould rival him in his Throne: I ſay, after all this (as was foretold by a Spirit of Prophecy above 200 years

* Vid. Juſtin. lib. 1. p. 5, 6, 7.

before

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before his Birth) he deliver'd the *Jews* from their ſeventy years Captivity in *Babylon*, and caus'd the Temple to be rebuilt at *Jeruſalem*, Iſa. 44. 28. and its Worſhip to be reſtor'd. Now what can ſuch a Series of Wonders be aſcrib'd to, but the Divine Providence? Many more of the like kind might be recited from ſacred Story; *But the time would fail me to tell of* Gideon, Heb. 11. 32, *and of* Barak, *and of* Samſon, *and of* Jephtha, 33, 34. —*of* Samuel, *and of the Prophets*; *who thro Faith ſubdued Kingdoms, wrought Righteouſneſs, obtain'd Promiſes,* —*eſcap'd the edg of the Sword, out of weakneſs were made ſtrong, wax'd valiant in fight, and turn'd to flight the Armies of the Aliens.* Yet it may not be unſutable briefly to recite ſome *Mighty Acts* of ſpecial Providence which God has wrought for this Nation; not to look ſo far back as the Defeat of the *Spaniſh* Armada, that was boaſted of as invincible, and the amazing Diſcovery of the Powder Plot: but to inſtance in ſome things within the memory of moſt of us, as the Happy Revolution by the illuſtrious Prince of *Orange*, who was afterwards deſervedly advanc'd to the Throne of theſe Realms; who enterpriz'd our Deliverance at a deſperate Juncture, and accompliſh'd it in ſo ſhort a time, that we were *like thoſe that dream.* The good News of our Happineſs was ſo ſudden and ſurprizing, that we believ'd not for Joy; as 'twas ſaid of the Diſciples of our Lord, when they were told that he was riſen from the dead. Matters had been brought to that extremity, that we had nothing in view, humanly ſpeaking, from which we could expect any Relief: Our Lives were in imminent danger, and our Liberties actually invaded: Our Schools of Learning like-

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ly to be turn'd into Popiſh Seminaries, and our Places of publick Worſhip into Idolatrous Temples: In a word, all that was dear to us lay at the mercy of Arbitrary Power. At which difficult Criſis it pleas'd God to proſper the Undertakings of that excellent Prince, but juſt now nam'd, and to give us by him an aſtoniſhing Deliverance, an amazing Salvation; which was not bought with a mighty effuſion of Blood, but came to us ſo cheap, that 'twas never put to the hazard of a Battel. And can any *Engliſh*-Man and Proteſtant look back upon this, without the higheſt Gratitude and moſt exalted Praiſe?

Again, we may very well eſteem the Reduction of *Ireland* as one of the *Mighty Acts* of God's ſpecial Providence; and particularly the Succeſs of our Arms at the *Boyn*, at a juncture the moſt ſeaſonable. Seaſonable I ſay, in regard it was neceſſary to give new Spirit at home, and to abate the Triumphs of our Enemies abroad, who had juſt then gain'd ſome advantage over our Navy: Seaſonable, becauſe the Fate of the whole Proteſtant Intereſt ſeem'd to depend on that hazardous Battel; a Battel that will be famous in Hiſtory, in regard of the Difficulties that our Hero ſurmounted, and the Glory that he won.

Again, how ſignal was the Hand of Divine Providence in the glorious Victory which the *Engliſh* obtain'd over the *French* Navy at *La Hogue*; when God, who holds the Winds in his hand, and cauſes them to blow from what Corner of the Heavens he pleaſeth, made uſe of 'em to chain up the *French* Fleet till ours were prepar'd to attack them; which was follow'd with ſuch Succeſs, that the *French* were

were utterly defeated, and the greateſt part of their Capital Ships deſtroy'd!

And what ſhall we ſay of King *William*'s taking of *Namur*, in the view of a great and numerous Army? Was it not an argument that God fought for us, and had girded our Prince with Strength unto Battel?

Moreover, the conſtant Preſervation of the late King *William* of glorious Memory, ought to be reckon'd among the *Mighty Acts* of God's ſpecial Providence to theſe Kingdoms. How eminently did the Lord of Hoſts cover the Head of that Great Prince in the Day of Battel abroad, and guard his Life from the murdering Hands of bloody Aſſaſſines at home! That Prince ſeem'd to be born for the common Benefit of Mankind, as he was moſt remarkably the Darling of Divine Providence. A Prince that might juſtly be call'd the Father of his People: for he had nothing more at heart than their Welfare, of which the words he utter'd with his dying Breath are a proof: *Is there*, ſaid he, *any more that I can do for my People?* Underſtanding, by the return that was made him, there was not; he, like *David*, *after he had ſerv'd his own Generation by the will of God, fell aſleep*. Serv'd his Generation, I ſay, by frequently hazarding his invaluable Life, and at the expence of a vaſt Sum out of his own Eſtate. Yet ſuch is the Ingratitude of ſome who enjoy'd the Benefits of his mild Reign, that they treat his Memory with an intolerable degree of Rudeneſs: But he is aſcended above the blaſts of Envy; and the Name of *WILLIAM* the Third ſhall ſhine in the Records of Fame, when theirs who have endeavour'd to ſtain it ſhall rot in eternal Oblivion.

Again,

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Again, the Preſervation of her preſent Majeſty, thro ſo many Difficulties and Temptations, to the peaceable Poſſeſſion of the Crown of theſe Realms, well deſerves to be number'd among the *Mighty Acts* of Divine Providence: Not all the Inſinuations of the Romiſh Clergy, nor the Authority of the King her Father, having been able to byaſs her (when ſhe mov'd in a lower Sphere) to act contrary to the Dictates of her Conſcience. And ſince Her Majeſty's happy Acceſſion to the Throne, Divine Providence has guarded Her Royal Perſon, and caus'd a Current of Succeſs to attend Her Arms. 'Tis under Her wiſe Adminiſtration that we enjoy our Civil and Religious Liberties, Peace, Plenty, and Proſperity at home, while other Countries are involv'd in the Miſeries of War. Now to what, but the ſpecial Indulgence of Heaven, can we aſcribe theſe Favours; together with that glorious Victory for which we praiſe God this Day, and concerning which, I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak more in the cloſe of my Sermon? I proceed now to the ſecond Head.

Secondly, I am to tell you what is comprehended in our praiſing of God for the *Mighty Acts* of his Providence.

1. It ſuppoſes that we ſtrictly obſerve in what Inſtances the Divine Attributes are diſplay'd in favour of our ſelves or others. Many among us are ſo unobſervant, that the moſt remarkable Occurrences in the Divine Government eſcape their notice: and if at any time the ſtrangeneſs of an Event invites their Curioſity to look into it, they ſeldom have regard to the firſt, but wholly account

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for it from ſecond Cauſes; forgetting that God keeps the Direction and Government of all Cauſes in his own hand, and that all the Springs of Nature are turn'd by him as he pleaſeth. And whatever ſome may ſay to excuſe this Neglect and Stupidity, 'tis too evident to be deny'd, that it ſprings from Infidelity and Irreligion. For thoſe that are regardleſs of the Divine Attributes, when diſplay'd in favour of the Righteous, and in terror to the Wicked, do by their Contempt and Careleſneſs render themſelves very criminal. And I find that the Royal Pſalmiſt pronounces the terrible doom of ſuch: *Becauſe*, ſays he, *they regard not the Works of the Lord, nor the Operation of his Hands, he ſhall deſtroy them, and not build them up.*

2. The Praiſing of God for the *Mighty Acts* of his Providence, ſuppoſes that we have a due value for the Benefits we receive, and a high eſteem of the Benefactor that beſtows them. While any thro Ignorance, or by the influence of Atheiſm, are unacquainted with the ſpecial Favours of Providence, no wonder if they continue under the guilt of an ungrateful Silence. For as Love ſuppoſes the Knowledg of the Object, ſo does Thankfulneſs the Senſe of an Obligation. And where there is a juſt Reflection on the Worth of our Mercies, it will effectually engage our Hearts and move our Tongues in the work of Praiſe. Now in order to value aright the Favours of Providence, we muſt affect our Minds with a lively Senſe of our provoking Sins; and the clearer view we have of the latter, the higher eſteem we ſhall have of the former. And as a Reflection on our Sins, with their various

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Aggravations, will increaſe our Regard to the Bleſſings of Providence; ſo the Conſideration of the excellent Nature and indearing Circumſtances of the Divine Favours confer'd upon us, would wonderfully excite our Gratitude. Who that reflects on the infinite Extent of the Divine Indulgence, the multitude of God's tender Mercies, the happy Seaſon that his unerring Wiſdom has fix'd for the beſtowing them, their Agreeableneſs to our Neceſſities, together with the diſintereſted Bounty and generous Freedom with which they are diſpens'd, but muſt ſet an extraordinary Value on the Favours of God; and the rather, when they conſider how much they ought to eſteem their great Benefactor for the Perfections of his Nature? Amongſt Men, we value a Gift as we love the Giver; ſo according to the ſtrength and fervour of our Love to God, ſhall we rate thoſe *Mighty Acts* of ſpecial Providence wrought in our favour. When the Pſalmiſt had taken a view of God's marvellous Works, he cries out in extaſy and rapture, *How precious alſo are thy Thoughts unto me, O God! and how great is the Sum of them! If I ſhould count them, they are more in number than the Sand.* And elſewhere in the Book of Pſalms we may obſerve, that the Gratitude of the Pſalmiſt did ariſe in proportion to the vigorous flame of his Love to God. *I will love thee, O Lord my Strength.——I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be prais'd— The Lord liveth, and bleſſed be my Rock; and let the God of my Salvation be exalted. It is God that avengeth me, and ſubdueth the People under me. He delivereth me from mine Enemies: Yea, thou lifteſt me up above thoſe that riſe up againſt me: Thou*

Pſal. 139. 17, 18.

Pſal. 18. 1, 3, 46, 47, 48, 49.

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Thou haſt deliver'd me from the man of Violence. Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the Heathen; and ſing Praiſes unto thy Name.

3. The praiſing of God for the *Mighty Acts* of his Providence, ſuppoſes that we have them impreſs'd on our Minds and lodg'd in our Memories; without which we ſhall be but faint in our Acknowledgments, and cool in our offering the Sacrifice of Praiſe. And 'tis remarkable, that the Pſalmiſt, who was one of the brighteſt Examples of Gratitude, did his utmoſt to imprint God's ſpecial Favours on his Mind: *I remember*, ſays he, *the days of old, I meditate on all thy Works, I muſe on the Work of thy hands.* Pſal. 143. 5. And in another Pſalm, this excellent Perſon ſhows how proper Meditation is to excite us to the Work of Praiſe: —*My mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful Lips; when I remember thee upon my Bed, and meditate on thee in the Night-watches.* And the Pſalmiſt being jealous of his own Heart, gives himſelf this ſolemn Charge; *Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits.* Pſal. 103. 2. Our Neceſſities will prompt us to pray, but the work of Praiſe depends on our Ingenuity. Alas! ſuch is the Ingratitude of moſt men, that there is hardly any thing in the world ſooner forgot by them, than the Works of God: and 'tis a ſtain in *our Character*, that we ſo much reſemble the *Iſraelites* of old, who *ſung God's Praiſe, but ſoon forgot his Works.*

The Benefits we receive from Heaven, are too commonly written in duſt, ſo that they are preſently wip'd out, ſoon forgotten; they paſs thro our Minds juſt like Birds thro the Air, that leave no track behind them: whereas in Souls that

that are truly thankful, and duly wrought up to the work of Praiſe, the Favours of God are very deeply engrav'd; and the ſenſe ſuch retain of them, is both lively and laſting.

The *Mighty Acts* of ſpecial Providence that God hath beſtow'd upon us as a Nation, for their number are ſo many, they can't be recounted; for their Quality ſo excellent, they can't be expreſs'd: ſo that a man muſt cloſe his Eyes not to ſee them, and be as inſenſible as a Rock, if he does not make ſome grateful Returns.

4. The praiſing of God for the *Mighty Acts* of his Providence, imports our having ſuch a warm ſenſe of his Mercies, as may engage us to make the moſt ſolemn and open Acknowledgments for them. Some indeed are ſo little affected with the Favours of Providence, that they receive them as the diſcharge of a Debt, rather than with a ſenſe of being under any Obligation to the Giver. Now in things of a lower concern, that man is mark'd for his Ingratitude, that receives a conſiderable Kindneſs with a cold Indifferency: But what words can ſet forth the vile Ingratitude of thoſe, who receive the ſpecial Favours of Divine Providence without any inward ſenſe of Joy, or outward expreſſion of Thankfulneſs?

There is no regular diſcharge of the Duty of Praiſe, without a cordial Reception of the Divine Benefits, and a grateful Acknowledgment to the kind Benefactor. And whenever our Hearts are warm'd with a ſenſe of Divine Love, our Tongues will ſing aloud of God's Goodneſs. Agreeable to this, was the practice of the Pſalmiſt: *I have not hid thy Righteouſneſs in my Heart,*

Pſ. 40.10.

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Heart, I have declar'd thy Faithfulneſs and thy Salvation, I have not conceal'd thy Loving-kindneſs and thy Truth from the great Congregation. To whatever other ſenſe theſe words may be accommodated with reſpect to the *Meſſiah*, to whom they are applied by the Author to the *Hebrews*, I now conſider them as they report the grateful Practice of the Pſalmiſt. Again, elſewhere ſays he, *I will ſing of the Mercies of God for ever, with my mouth will I make known his Faithfulneſs to all Generations. I will publiſh with the voice of Thankſgiving, and tell of all his wondrous Works. But who can utter the Mighty Acts of the Lord? Who can ſhew forth all his Praiſe?* Pſal. 89. 1.

Finally, to our verbal Acknowledgments we muſt join the regular Conduct of our Lives, and the prudent Diſtribution of our Alms. *Let us break off our Sins by Righteouſneſs, and our Iniquities by ſhowing mercy to the Poor; if ſo be it may be a lengthening of our Tranquillity.* The moſt agreeable Hymns will be but grating Diſcords, unleſs they are follow'd with Acts of Charity. The Calves of our Lips will be inſignificant, without the Sacrifice of our Alms; which, when offer'd from a right Principle, and to a due End, *is an Odour of a ſweet Smell, and a Sacrifice acceptable and well-pleaſing to God.* Phil. 4. 18.

'Tis obſervable, that when *Abraham* return'd from the ſlaughter of the Kings, and *Melchiſedeck* refreſh'd his weary Troops with Bread and Wine, the conquering Patriarch gave the Tenth of the Spoils he had taken in War to the Prieſt of the moſt High God. And whether it was from this Inſtance, or any other of the like nature, I will not determine, that the

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the Gentile Nations fell into a Practice not unlike it. 'Tis well known, that among the Heathens, when they have had successful Campagns, they devoted the first and best of the Spoil to the Service of his Temple, by whose favourable Influence they suppos'd the Victory was obtain'd. And among the Jews, besides the Obligations they were under to devote the Tenth of their Estates to the Service of God, there was something they were oblig'd to part with, out of the Spoils they took in War. Now, *if the Jews were not to appear before the Lord empty*, but every man was to give as he was able, according as the Lord had bless'd him; how much stronger is the Obligation upon us who are eas'd in a great measure of that Charge, to which the Ceremonial part of the Jewish Religion constantly oblig'd its Votaries? Upon days of Fasting, we are requir'd *to deal our Bread to the Hungry*, much more on days of Thanksgiving. 'Tis remarkable, that when the Jews celebrated a Day of Thanksgiving for their Deliverance from the malicious and mischievous Designs
Esth. 9. of *Haman*, 'twas not only a Day of *Feasting and Joy*, but *of sending Portions to one another, and of Gifts to the Poor*. And what time can be more seasonable than this *Good Day*, this Day of solemn Triumph, to dispense our liberal Alms? To close this Head, let us remember that our Praises must be offer'd to Almighty God with Affection and Fervour, with Sincerity and Delight, in Faith, and in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. But I hasten,

Thirdly,

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Thirdly, To ſpeak to the great Obligations we are under to praiſe God for the *Mighty Acts* of his ſpecial Providence, wrought in favour of his People. And,

1. Our Obligation to praiſe God for his ſpecial Favours, is founded on natural Equity. Praiſe, as well as Prayer, is a Branch of Natural Religion: *I will*, ſays the Pſalmiſt, *praiſe the Name of God with a Song, and will magnify him with Thankſgiving; this alſo ſhall pleaſe the Lord better than an Ox or a Bullock, that hath Horns and Hoofs.* In which words, Praiſe is prefer'd to Sacrifices, the moſt ſolemn part of God's poſitive Worſhip among the Jews: And hence we collect that God was better pleas'd with the hearty Praiſes of his People, than with the Victims they laid on his Altar. Praiſe is a juſt Tribute that we owe to Heaven: Can any thing in the world be more equitable, than that he who is the Author of our Victories, ſhould be the Object of our Praiſes? There is a moral Obligation upon Men to give each other what is juſt: *Render*, ſays the Apoſtle, *to all their dues; Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Cuſtom to whom Cuſtom, Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour.* And 'tis upon this natural Principle of Juſtice, that open and ſolemn Acknowledgments for ſpecial Benefits, are God's juſt Due, and our indiſpenſable Duty: *Give unto the Lord the Glory due unto his Name.* But alas, how common is it to rob God of the eaſy and juſt Tribute of his Praiſe! eſpecially when Armies have been fleſh'd with Victories, they are apt *to ſacrifice to their own Net, and burn Incenſe to their own Drag*; they give the Glory of their Succeſſes to their own Proweſs and

Pſ. 69. 30, 31.

Rom. 13.

Pſal. 29.

Conduct. *Moſes* having a jealouſy of the *Iſraelites*, cautions 'em againſt this particular Sin: *Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God*—— *to ſay in thy Heart, My Power and the Might of my Hand hath gotten me this Wealth.* The Wiſe-Man has long ſince remark'd, *That the Race is not to the Swift, nor the Battel to the Strong.* And ſays the Pſalmiſt, *I will not truſt to my Bow, neither ſhall my Sword ſave me. The Horſe is prepar'd againſt the day of Battel, but Victory is of the Lord.* And elſewhere, *In God,* ſays he, *we boaſt all the day long, and praiſe thy Name for ever:* which words are thought to be the Reſult of *David*'s pious Reflections upon the glorious Succeſs of *Iſrael*'s Arms againſt the *Canaanites*; where he traces all back to the firſt Cauſe, and accordingly gives the Glory of that Victory, not to *Moſes* or *Joſhua*, but to the Lord of Hoſts. And unleſs we practiſe agreeably to this, we ſlight the Kindneſs of Heaven, and violate the Law of Nature. 'Tis impoſſible to be ungrateful, without being unjuſt; eſpecially when the Favours that God beſtows, are a ſignal Return to the Prayers of his People: As we may well eſteem the late glorious Victory, for which we are aſſembled to praiſe God this day. How often have we in this place pray'd for the Succeſs of her Majeſty's Arms, together with thoſe of her Allies? and have expoſtulated with God in the words of the Pſalmiſt, *Wilt not thou, O God, who haſt caſt us off; Wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our Hoſts?* And did we not on that occaſion ſolemnly promiſe, if God would hear our Cry, and plead our Cauſe, and ſcatter our Enemies, that we would praiſe him with the Voice of Thankſgiving? And ſhall we not now pay *our*

Pſal. 108.

ſolemn

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ſolemn Vows to the Almighty, which our Lips uttered and our Mouths have ſpoken when we were in trouble? And when 'tis evident, that God has *given a Spirit of Judgment to thoſe that ſit in Judgment, and Strength to ſuch as turn the Battel from the Gates.* And if theſe things ſhould be forgotten, we ſhall break both a voluntary as well as a natural Obligation, and become doubly guilty of ſo foul an Ingratitude that no words can deſcribe. But I hope I ſpeak to ſuch as are ready to ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *We love the Lord, becauſe he hath heard the voice of our Supplications; becauſe he hath inclin'd his Ear unto us, therefore will we call upon him as long as we live. Bleſſed be God who has not turn'd away our Prayer, nor his Mercy from us.* But,

2. Our Obligation to praiſe God for the *Mighty Acts* of his peculiar and diſtinguiſhing Providence, may be argued from the ſpecial Advantages that attend the regular Performance of this Duty: And they are ſuch as theſe.

(1.) The faithful Diſcharge of the Duty of Praiſe is attended with a peculiar Pleaſure; a Pleaſure truly rational and ſublime. We are indeed aſſur'd, *That none of God's Commands are grievous*; and *that the ways of Wiſdom are ways of Pleaſantneſs, and all her Paths are Peace:* tho it can't be denied, but that ſome Duties of Religion have more of difficulty and labour attending them than others; as Repentance, and the Mortification of Sin, which are attended with much Trouble and Sorrow, tho temper'd with ſome degrees of Hope and Comfort.

I might alſo inſtance in the Duty of Prayer, a Service in which good men delight; yet Con-

feſſion, which is a part of Prayer, cannot be manag'd aright, without ſorrowful reflections on our Guilt and Folly in ſinning againſt God. But when we engage in the work of Praiſe, we fix our Eyes on his aſtoniſhing Goodneſs diſplay'd in various Inſtances on our behalf, which muſt needs afford us a very agreeable Proſpect, and occaſion a ſublimated Pleaſure.

Prayer is moſt ſuted to the State of the Afflicted, but Praiſe to the Condition of the Chearful, as the Apoſtle *James* intimates in
James 5. 3. theſe words: *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray: Is any merry? let him ſing Pſalms.* A pleaſant and delightful Practice, as the ſweet Pſalmiſt of *Iſrael* aſſures us from his own Expe-
Pſ. 135. 3. rience: *Praiſe the Lord*, ſays he, *for the Lord is good: Sing Praiſes to his Name, for it is pleaſant.*
147. 1. And in another Pſalm, *Praiſe ye the Lord, for it is good to ſing Praiſes to our God; for it is pleaſant, and Praiſe is comely.* Praiſe is the Offſpring of Divine Love, than which nothing can produce a higher Pleaſure and Joy in the Mind; Love is the moſt ſoft and eaſy Paſſion, which being influenc'd and excited by the diſtinguiſhing Kindneſſes of Heaven, cauſes the Soul to overflow with Joy and Gladneſs. When the Royal Pſalmiſt had pray'd for the utter Deſtruction of the Enemies of God, he
68. 3, 4. immediately ſubjoins; *But let the Righteous be glad, let them rejoice before God, yea, let them exceedingly rejoice. Sing unto God, ſing Praiſes to his Name: Extol him that rideth upon the Heavens by his Name* Jah, *and rejoice before him.* And when God had ſignally preſerv'd the Pſalmiſt, and reſcu'd him from the hands of his treacherous Foes, he reviews his Deliverance with a peculiar ſort of Pleaſure: for ſays he,

Thou

Thou haſt turn'd for me my Mourning into Dancing; thou haſt put off my Sackcloth, and girded me with Gladneſs. To the end that my Glory may ſing Praiſe to thee, and not be ſilent: O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever. Pſ. 30. 11, 12.

(2.) Another Advantage that attends our praiſing of God, is, that it will reſtrain us from the commiſſion of Sin, and quicken us in the performance of the neceſſary Duties of our Holy Religion. Chriſtians will be able, thro the Grace of God, to baffle the moſt violent Temptations to Sin, while they retain a vigorous ſenſe of the Divine Goodneſs on their Souls; for they argue thus with themſelves: "Has God by a peculiar and diſtinguiſhing "Providence watch'd over and defended us? "Has he ſcatter'd the Proud in the Imagina- "tions of their Hearts? Has he encompaſs'd "us about with his Favour as with a Shield? "Has he indulg'd us with the Bleſſings of the "upper and the nether Spring? Has his right "Hand and his holy Arm gotten us the Vic- "tory over our Enemies? And ſhall we dare "again to break his holy Commandment? "God forbid. How can we do this great "Wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?" Again, with regard to the Duties of Religion, none are ſo likely to perform them as thoſe whoſe Hearts are inflam'd with the Love of God; there is no Motive more powerful to engage us in a ſteddy Courſe of Obedience: ſo much the Royal Pſalmiſt intimates in theſe words; *For thy Loving-Kindneſs is before mine eyes, and I have walk'd in thy truth.* Pſal. 26. 3. So long as we keep the Loving-Kindneſs of God in view, it will make us *ſteddy and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.* And proportionable

to the vigorous sense we have of the Divine Favours, will be our Care to honour and please God. If our Hearts are enlarg'd with a sense of his Love, we shall run swiftly in the way of his Precepts.

Those Men that are rightly dispos'd for the work of Praise, and who retain a quick sense of their Obligations to Heaven, will argue themselves into a conformity to the Divine Precepts after this manner: "We are unworthy to breathe in God's Air, or to tread on his Earth; we are less than the least of all his Mercies; we are before him as nothing, yea, *less than nothing, and vanity*; we are guilty rebellious Creatures; we have abus'd his Patience, despis'd his Goodness, affronted his Holiness, dar'd his Power, and provok'd him to Anger most bitterly by our repeated Abominations; yet hath he loaded us with his Benefits: *the Lines are fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly Heritage: What shall we render to God for all his Benefits? We will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.* Nothing can be too much for us to do or suffer for him, who is our Hope and Help, *our Fortress and strong Tower*, our kind and generous Benefactor, our *Shield and our exceeding great Reward.*" Now if such an Advantage as this does necessarily attend the regular Discharge of the Duty of Praise, how great is our Obligation to perform it?

(3.) Another Advantage attending the work of Praise, is, that it will give the Soul such a view of God's absolute Perfections and relative Goodness, as will greatly humble it. No Person ever set such an Example of Humility, as the

the incarnate Son of God, becauſe no Perſon had ſo comprehenſive a Knowledg of the Perfections of the Godhead: O how great, how ſurprizing is this raviſhing Myſtery! The bleſſed Jeſus was holy and harmleſs, undefil'd and ſeparate from Sinners; he had not the leaſt Pollution to humble and abaſe him, yea, he *thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet he humbled himſelf, and became obedient even to the Death of the Croſs.* But tho we profeſs to be the Diſciples of this bleſſed Lord, we are encompaſs'd about with manifold Sins, and yet are ſo vain as to think too highly of our ſelves. Now a Soul that is often engag'd in the work of praiſing God, gains ſuch a view of the Divine Excellency, as diſcovers its own Guilt and Deformity, and ſo keeps it at the foot of God: For the clearer our Conceptions are of the Divine Attributes, the deeper ſenſe we ſhall get of our own Ignorance and Weakneſs. This effect it had upon *Job: I have heard of thee by the Hearing of the Ear; but now mine Eye ſeeth thee: Wherefore I abhor my ſelf, and repent in Duſt and Aſhes.* Job 42. 5. Now 'tis no ſlight favour to have our Humility increas'd, which is not only a bright Ornament to the Chriſtian Life, but it is that on which God ſets a high value, and to which he has made great Promiſes: *The Meek will he guide in Judgment, the Meek will he teach his way.* Pſal. 25. 9.

(4.) Thoſe that are not backward in praiſing God for the Mercies they have receiv'd, are ordinarily favour'd with richer Benefits. The juſt Tribute of Praiſe they ſend up to Heaven, does not return empty. 'Tis remarkable in Nature, that the Vapours which are exhal'd by the Sun, and aſcend towards Heaven, make

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way for fruitful Showers: ſo the Praiſes (as well as the Prayers) we direct upwards, draw down for us a liberal Supply. *Let the People praiſe thee, O God, let the People praiſe thee; then ſhall the Earth yield her Increaſe, and God, even our God, ſhall bleſs us.* Whereas an ungrateful Silence will ſtop the Current of Divine Favours, and ſhut up the Bowels of Mercy it ſelf. And now who that has the leaſt ſpark of Ingenuity can want a Diſpoſition to engage in a Work ſo pleaſant and eaſy, ſo honourable and advantageous, that does tend to the enlarging the Powers of our Minds, and the perfecting of our Natures, and happily ſecures to us future Bleſſings? The Worſhip of the Jews under the Old Teſtament was coſtly and troubleſome; but what God requires of us under the New, is the eaſy and cheap *Sacrifice of Praiſe, the Calves of our Lips.*

Pſ. 67. 5, 6.

Finally, I might argue our Obligations to praiſe God from the Nature and Excellency of the Duty it ſelf. Praiſe is juſtly to be prefer'd before Prayer, as being the more noble and excellent piece of Service. Our Obligation to pray, commenc'd with our Guilt; but Praiſe was the proper imploy of Man in Paradiſe, as it ſhall be hereafter in Heaven. Now that which was the Duty of reaſonable Creatures in Innocency, and remains to be ſo ſince the Fall, and ſhall be their Imployment in Heaven, ought to have the preference to other parts of Worſhip. Praiſe is a work common to the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant. Thoſe that are admitted neareſt to the Throne of God, and have the brighteſt views of his Glory, are always ingag'd in this agreeable Service: The Language of Heaven is *Hallelujah.* 'Tis

in

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in the work of Praiſe that we have near and cloſe Communion with Angels and the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, as well as with him who is the Head of all Principalities and Powers.

The united Thankſgivings and Praiſes of a whole Kingdom, is as if Heaven was come down upon Earth, or as if we had begun our Heaven here. In a word, as our Obligations to praiſe God are eternal, ſo the work of Praiſe, like the Object we adore, ſhall laſt for ever. But what refin'd Delights will mix with our Songs, when we ſtrike up in concert with the whole Hoſt of Heaven, we ſhall not perfectly know, till we are got out of this World, that's full of Diſcord and Hatred, into the other where there is nothing but Harmony and Love. But I proceed to the laſt thing I propos'd, *viz.*

To make ſome Improvement ſutable to the ſolemn and joyful Occaſion of our preſent meeting.

Waving ſeveral Inferences that might be drawn from what has been diſcours'd, I ſhall mention but two, and haſten to a Cloſe.

1ſt, If we are under ſuch great Obligations as you have heard to praiſe God for the *mighty Acts* of his diſtinguiſhing Providence, then 'tis reaſonable the ſignal Favours theſe Kingdoms have ſhar'd ſhould be tranſmitted to Poſterity.

What Hiſtory can furniſh us with ſuch a ſurprizing Series of Bleſſings, as has attended theſe Nations from the happy Revolution in 1688, to this very day? None either antient or modern, except what we meet with in the Holy Scriptures.

Therefore

Therefore let us hand down the Knowledg of theſe things from Age to Age, that upon a ſerious review of them, both we and our Children may be encourag'd to hope in the Mercy, and truſt in the Arm of the Lord of Hoſts. And for this very end, God gave a Law in *Iſrael*, that they ſhould ſhew to Poſterity *the*

Pſal. 78. 4, 5, 6, 7. *Praiſes of the Lord, his Strength, and the wonderful Works he has done. For he eſtabliſh'd a Teſtimony in* Jacob, *and appointed a Law in* Iſrael, *which he commanded our Fathers, that they ſhould make them known to their Children: That the Generations to come might know them, even the Children which ſhould be born; who ſhould ariſe and declare them to their Children: That they might ſet their hope in God, and not forget the Works of God; but keep his Commandments.*

2*dly*, How reaſonable is it that we ſhould praiſe God with the moſt exalted Vigour, as well for the late *mighty Acts* of his Providence, as for thoſe of an antienter date! I hope many of us have a warm and a lively ſenſe of the great Goodneſs of God to us, in the aſtoniſhing Succeſs of her Majeſty's Arms, and thoſe of her Allies, under the Command of the Duke of *Marlborough*. And if our Minds are ſuitably affected with the late glorious Victory, for which we are aſſembled to praiſe God, we ſhall not make a faint and languiſhing Acknowledgment, but engage all the active Powers of our Minds, that we may *praiſe him according to his excellent Greatneſs*. To promote which end, let me prevail with you to conſider the following things.

1. How little reaſon we had to expect that Divine Providence ſhould caſt the Victory on our ſide, when our Iniquities were ſo many and

and aggravated againſt Heaven. Surely we are a *ſinful People, a Nation laden with Iniquity, a Seed of evil doers, Children that are Corrupters.* The Peace that we have had at home has render'd us ſtupid, and our Plenty has been abus'd by Exceſſes.

England has been the Theatre of God's Judgments as well as the Scene of his Wonders: What an amazing Judgment was the late Storm! Yet equally amazing is it that the Impreſſion it made ſhould be ſo ſoon worn out, and that aweful Warning no better improv'd! How do Men lay the Reins on the Neck of their Luſts, and outrage God with his own Benefits? How have we ſpurn'd at the Bowels that ſounded towards us, and lifted up our Heels againſt him who has often ſtretch'd forth his Arm for our Salvation? Aſtoniſhing Goodneſs! that God ſhould appear for ſo wicked and unthankful a People as we are, and make our Arms Victorious. Let this Conſideration greatly excite us to praiſe the Lord of Hoſts.

2. Conſider the Seaſonableneſs of this late Victory: Our Affairs had a very melancholy Aſpect at home, the Spirit of a Party had too much prevail'd and divided the common Intereſt and Strength; and abroad almoſt all lay at the hazard of a Battel. Now at this critical Juncture did Providence interpoſe, and give the Victory on our ſide; nothing ſure could have been more opportune: Let therefore the Seaſonableneſs of this Victory inſpire us with ſutable fervour, and give a ſprightly accent to the Hallelujahs we ſing this day.

3. Conſider the Greatneſs of this Victory: The *French* themſelves call the *Day* that it was obtain'd, the *fatal*, and *mortal Day*. And if

if we take the number of the ſlain from their own Accounts, 'tis extraordinary; probably a more entire Victory has not been obtain'd in the laſt Age, in any part of *Europe*.

We know ſome Princes abroad have boaſted of Victories they never obtain'd, and have hurry'd their poor Slaves to the Temple to ſing *Te Deum*, when their Armies have been beaten in the Field.

How has a neighbouring Monarch brib'd his own Hiſtorians to publiſh partial Accounts, that by hiding Danger from his People, he might keep up the Vigour of their Spirits!

But the *glorious Victory* we praiſe God for this day is ſo real and compleat, that we need not fear the Light, but leave our Enemies to tell the Story; for 'tis remarkable, that all the Accounts that have come ſince the Battel was fought at *Bleinheim*, rather enlarge than leſſen the Succeſſes and the Triumphs of that never-to-be-forgotten Day. Now the Greatneſs of this Victory is yet more viſible, if we conſider that the Flower and Glory of *France*, the beſt diſciplin'd Troops that Prince had, were ingag'd againſt us; and at the head of them ſome of the braveſt Officers that have appear'd in fight, ſuch as had been us'd to lead out to Battel, and to lead on to Victory; Troops the *French* King thought almoſt invincible, they having ſo often fetch'd home Victories thro Fields of Blood: and not only the *French* Generals, but the Elector of *Bavaria* muſt be acknowledg'd a Man of an Enterprizing and Martial Genius; and one that formerly had ſpread his conquering Banners in the Plains of *Vienna*, and had been honour'd with Succeſs and Victory in many Battels. Moreover, their

their Number was ſuperior to ours, and they had very much the Advantage of the Ground: And ſo confident were our Enemies of Succeſs, that they took no care to ſecure their Retreat, who were not us'd to be wanting in that reſpect. But notwithſtanding all theſe things, we have obtain'd an entire Victory; ſo that the greateſt part of the *French* Army was either ſlain in the Field, or puſh'd into the *Danube*.

Sometimes a great Army is defeated, when yet the greateſt part of them eſcape; but here it was quite otherwiſe: Our Enemies *were given as Duſt to the Sword* of our General, *and as driven Stubble to his Bow*. Indeed the Diſpute between the two Armies was hot and long; but the greater the Hazard in the Combat, the brighter the Glory in the Iſſue. 'Tis number'd among the Glories of the great Captain *Hannibal*, that he reſolv'd to beſiege *Rome*, tho he was never able to lead his Army within the view of her Walls. But what then ſhall we ſay of the matchleſs Courage of her Majeſty's Captain-General, who did not only march an *Engliſh* Army into the very heart of the *German* Empire to engage one more numerous, but when one Wing of ours began to give way, had the Prudence and the Preſence of Mind to rally it again, which under God turn'd the Scale? So that once more the World has had a ſignal Inſtance of *Engliſh* Bravery, under the Influence and Bleſſing of Heaven: *For 'tis the Lord's doing, and it ought to be marvellous in our Eyes.* Iſa. 41. 2.

4. Conſider what kind of Enemies they were, which Heaven has vanquiſh'd by her Majeſty's Forces; ſuch as are falſe and treacherous, full of Miſchief and all Subtilty, whoſe tender

tender Mercies are cruel, a People profound for Slaughter, very expert in the use of those Weapons that devour Flesh. God has prosper'd our Arms against a Prince, whose exhorbitant Power and boundless Ambition have push'd him forward to aspire after a Universal Monarchy: One that has stoop'd to all the base Methods, that could be fram'd by Earth or Hell, to accomplish his Designs.

How has he persecuted and destroy'd his own Subjects, and with what Treachery and Baseness has he acted towards his Neighbours? bidding an open defiance to Honour and Religion, breaking all solemn Engagements and Treaties, upon the least prospect he had to enlarge his Dominions, and to prepare his way for Universal Empire.

Indeed, *WILLIAM* the Third, of glorious memory, gave frequent Checks to the Ambition of this Prince; but Heaven seems to have reserv'd the great Work of humbling this proud Tyrant to his immediate Successor in the Throne, who has by her victorious Arms obscur'd the Glory of *France*.

5. Consider the Distance of the place, which was the Scene of the late glorious Victory: This happy Circumstance ought to engage us to praise God with the more Warmth and Vigour. We have the Advantage of the Victory, without hearing the confused noise of the Warrior, or seeing of Garments roll'd in Blood. O what cause have we to bless God, that the War has been kept out of the Bowels of our Country? Who can relate the Miseries and Desolations that the Inhabitants of those Places are involv'd in, where great Battels are fought, by the Sallies and Excursions of different Parties,

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ties, before Victory is caſt on either ſide?

No Words can deſcribe what Horror fills thoſe places that are made the Seat of War; where men loſe their Property, and are in continual hazard of their Lives, have their Houſes plunder'd and then fir'd, their Daughters and Wives raviſh'd in their view, and the diſmal Groans of the Dying always in their ears. But bleſſed be God, we of this happy Nation are kept from ſuch Diſtreſſes by his indulgent Providence.

6. A Victory over the Enemies of our Religion and Liberties, is greater in its Conſequences than for a Nation to eſcape a Plague or a Famine: for neither of theſe Judgments affect the Religious or the Civil Liberties of a People; the Law has ſtill its free Courſe, Courts of Juſtice are open. And 'tis remarkable, that *David* choſe rather that a Famine or a Peſtilence ſhould be brought on his Kingdom, than to flee before his Enemies. 2 Sam. 24. 13.

What can a Proteſtant Nation expect if conquer'd by Papiſts, whoſe Reſentments are deep and their Revenge high, being both excited by Superſtition? What can we expect leſs than to be hinder'd in the Exerciſe of our Religion, and to be depriv'd of our Civil Rights and Properties, than which nothing can be dearer to us, both as Proteſtants and *Engliſhmen?*

'Tis remarkable, that when the *Grecians* were ſet free by *Flaminius* the *Roman* General, their Joy was too big for their Hearts, and they could ſcarce believe their own ears: For when the Cryer proclaim'd their Liberty, they deſir'd that ſweet word LIBERTY might be repeated again. O ſhall not we, who have our Liberties ſecur'd to us under a happy Con-

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Conſtitution, be ſenſible of our Privileges, as likewiſe of the important Conſequences of the late Victory? A Victory that has not only ſecur'd and ſav'd the ſinking Empire, and inſpir'd with Vigour the whole Confederacy, but will be to us a Pledg of future and greater Bleſſings, if our Sins do not provoke God to depart from us, and give us the Reverſe of our preſent Happineſs.

But ſome may be ready to ſay, that we puſh this matter too far, and conclude the Goodneſs of our Cauſe from the Greatneſs of our Succeſs. To ſuch we are ready to grant, that Succeſs will not make a Cauſe good, if it be not ſo before. But if to defend the Liberties of Mankind againſt a mighty Oppreſſor, be a good Cauſe, ours is ſo: If to maintain the Title of a Proteſtant Queen to the Imperial Crown of theſe Realms, together with the Succeſſion as by Law eſtabliſh'd in the Proteſtant Line, againſt the Deſign of impoſing a ſuppoſititious Heir on the Nation, be a good Cauſe, ours is ſo; and God has own'd it from Heaven, in the late memorable Victory we are aſſembled to praiſe him for this day. But in the midſt of our Praiſes and Triumphs, let us be humble and modeſt, let not our Succeſſes render us too ſanguine and confident. In a word, let us be careful that no Exceſſes ſtain the Glory of this Thankſgiving-Day.

To conclude: Let us earneſtly pray that as God has begun to humble a haughty Tyrant by the hand of a Woman, ſo her Majeſty may ſcourge his Inſolence, and lay all his Honour in the duſt.

May Succeſs attend the Counſels, and Victory the Arms of Q. *ANNE*; may ſhe be the happy

happy Inſtrument of reſtoring an honourable and laſting Peace to *Europe*, and may Her Piety tranſcend that of all Her Predeceſſors: May her Name be great on Earth, and ſhine in the Rolls of Fame as long as the Sun and Moon endure: May the Wiſdom of God direct Her, the Angels of God encamp round about Her: May ſhe always reign in the Hearts of her Subjects, and trample on the Necks of her Enemies; and let all the People ſay *Amen*.

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A

Funeral Sermon

Occaſion'd by the

D E A T H

Of the Reverend

Mr. *SAMUEL EWER*,

Late Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Hempſtead* in *Hartfordſhire*.

Preach'd *Decemb.* the 24*th*, 1708.

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ECCLES. IX. 5.

For the Living know that they ſhall die.—

IT has not only been the Obſervation of thoſe who liv'd before us, that all things in this World vary and are ſubject to change, but every one experiences the Truth of it. And tho we have not had either the Capacity or the Opportunity, with which the wiſeſt of Men was favour'd, to ſearch into the Nature of all thoſe Creatures, which compoſe the vaſt Syſtem of the World; yet there are ſcarce any of us ſo little acquainted with our ſelves, or the World we live in, but have reaſon to pronounce with *Solomon*, that all we meet with here *is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit.*

We cannot find enough in our ſelves to render us happy, and 'tis impoſſible that the Creatures which are ſubject to Vanity ſhould make us ſo. Uncertainty is inſcrib'd upon all things in this World; and as for Life it ſelf, one of the moſt valuable Bleſſings, we are not ſure of enjoying it for a moment to come:

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Jam. 4. 14. For, as St. *James* obſerves, *What is your Life? 'tis even a Vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vaniſhes away.*

Does it not then equally deſerve our Compaſſion and Wonder, that the generality of People ſhould ſtupidly neglect their Preparation for Death? tho they know as certainly that they ſhall die as that they now live, and that 'tis not in the Power of any Mortal to protract a ſhort Life, or prevent a ſudden Death. *The Living know that they ſhall die*; this is a Truth that Men need not have prov'd to 'em by a long train of Reaſoning: The Records of the Grave are a ſtanding Evidence of Man's Mortality; and every day convinces us, *That Man in his beſt Eſtate is altogether Vanity*; and that Men indefinitely, one as well as another, *go to their long Home, and the Mourners go about the Streets.* Yet many live at ſuch a rate, as if this Life wou'd never have an end, and as if the other wou'd never begin; tho there is not a Man living but knows he ſhall die. This is a Truth that the World has been acquainted with above five thouſand years: and leſt any ſhould be ſo vain as to imagine that they are exempted from the Common Law of Mortality, God does frequently admoniſh 'em, by Diſeaſes and Decays in their Bodies, that this earthly Houſe of their Tabernacle muſt ſhortly be diſſolv'd and crumble into Duſt. *The Living know that they ſhall die.*

The neceſſity of Dying is equally invinci-
Pſal. 89. 48. ble to all; *What Man is he that liveth, and*
Zech. 1. 5. *ſhall not ſee Death? Shall he deliver his Soul from the Hand of the Grave?* Selah. *Your Fathers, where are they? And the Prophets, do they live*

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live for ever? As all things come alike to all, as Ver. 2.
the Wiſe-Man obſerves, and *there is one Event to the Righteous and to the Wicked,* as to the good and evil things of this Life: ſo it is with reſpect to Death it ſelf; for the Holy as well as the Profane are ſubject to the Great Law of Mortality: *They ſhall lie down alike* Job 21. 26.
in the Duſt, and the Worms ſhall cover them. The Living (however differenc'd and diſtinguiſh'd in their Characters while living) *know that they ſhall die.*

The Connexion of theſe Words with the Context, is not eaſily diſcern'd at the firſt View. But however, after the Wiſe-Man had aſſerted, that the Diſpenſations of Divine Providence are promiſcuous and dark; and that we are not capable of diſcerning God's Favour or Diſpleaſure by what happens to Men in this Life; he tells us, That *this is an Evil a-* Ver. 3.
mong all things that are done under the Sun, that there is one Event unto all. The meaning of which Phraſe I take to be this, That 'tis very troubleſome and ſhocking to wiſe and good Men, that they ſhou'd be as much expos'd to Miſery and Trouble in this Life as the Wicked themſelves. Then he inſinuates how apt bad Men are to abuſe the Divine Patience: *Yea, alſo the Heart of the Sons of Men is full of Evil, and Madneſs is in their Heart while they live.* The Thoughts of the Divine Forbearance towards 'em, puſh them on violently in a courſe of Sin, as the Wiſe-Man elſewhere obſerves: *Becauſe Sentence againſt an* Eccl. 8. 11.
evil Work is not executed ſpeedily, therefore the Heart of the Sons of Men is fully ſet in them to do Evil; and after that they go to the Dead. They ſink into the Grave like other Mortals:

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for *Solomon* lets us know, that Death puts an end to the Happineſs, as well as to the Precipitancy and Madneſs of the Wicked: for he adds
Ver. 4. immediately, *For him that is join'd to all the Living, there is Hope. Melancthon* * tranſlates the Words thus, *What therefore is to be choſen? in one that is alive there is Hope:* And in anſwer, ſays he, to thoſe who, being diſturb'd at the Confuſion of things, ask'd, Muſt we then chuſe to labour, when we meet with no Rewards? *Solomon* replies, by all means, follow your Callings, and leave Events to God. *In one that is alive, there is Hope*; which may be extended to the Mind as well as to our outward Concerns: there is Hope, Men may live to ſee their Follies, correct their Miſtakes, amend their Lives, and recover the Favour of God, which is irrecoverably loſt when gone from hence.

But he adds, *A living Dog is better than a dead Lion*; whereby he wou'd ſignify the juſt Preference which ought to be given to Life, above any thing that is inanimate. The meaneſt Creature living is better than the nobleſt dead. But ſome may be ready to ask, Is not this inconſiſtent with what the Wiſe-Man
Eccl. 4. 2. has elſewhere advanc'd, in *praiſing the Dead which are already dead, more than the Living which are yet alive?* To this I return, that in one Paſſage he has regard to the Troubles of Life, and in the other to the Advantages of it; ſo that taking him in theſe different Views, the ſeeming Contradiction is perfectly reconcil'd: and then follows the Text, *But the Living know that they ſhall die.*

* Vid. *Dr.* Patrick's *Paraphraſe.*

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The Royal Preacher wou'd not have Life undervalu'd, nor wou'd he have Rational Beings ignorant of the Offices of Life; and therefore having aſſerted the Dignity of it, he adds, *For the Living know that they ſhall die:* q.d. Life is to be improv'd as a Preparation for Death, and Time as it may diſpoſe us for a Bleſſed Eternity. So that he ſeems here to inſinuate, that to die well is the great End of living; and that Life it ſelf is principally to be valu'd on this account, as it gives us an Opportunity to prepare for our great Change, that we may make a comfortable and happy Exit out of this World; *For the Living know*, &c.

In diſcourſing of theſe Words I ſhall,

I. Speak of the Knowledg that the Living have concerning their Death.

II. Show you, that tho the Living are under a neceſſity of dying, 'tis no Reflection either on the Juſtice or Goodneſs of God.

III. Inquire whence it is that the generality of the Living neglect their Preparation for Death, tho they certainly know they ſhall die.

I. We are to ſpeak of the Knowledg that the Living have concerning their Death.

The Living know that they ſhall die, that the Union betwixt Soul and Body ſhall be diſſolved, that they ſhall leave this World and enter on another State; and Reaſon dictates that they ſhall then be converſant with a World of Spirits; and agreeably to their good or bad Behaviour here, be happy or miſerable hereafter. The

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The Frame and Conſtitution of Human Nature is ſuch, that every one who makes juſt Reflections on his own Being and Faculties, muſt readily acknowledg, that Man is compos'd of two very different Principles, *viz.* Matter and Spirit. Now all material compounded Beings are ſubject to Diſſolution. Indeed the Soul is Immaterial, and conſequently Immortal: I don't ſay 'tis abſolutely immortal, for in that ſenſe God only hath Immortality. Yet our Souls are incapable of dying, becauſe there are no internal Cauſes of Diſſolution in a Spiritual Subſtance. I acknowledg that God may, if he pleaſes, annihilate Human Souls; but I know no reaſon which ſhould induce us to believe that he will: tho we have the greateſt reaſon in the World to conclude, that we ſhall put off theſe Bodies, and that they ſhall be reduc'd to Duſt, from whence they were at firſt taken.

Again, the Experience of every Age has ſhown that Men are mortal, and the Living of the preſent Age know that they are compos'd of the ſame frail Materials as thoſe were, who liv'd and died in Ages paſt; and as they fill up the rooms of others who are gone, they know they muſt ſhortly lie down in the Duſt, that others may ſucceed in their room. *One Generation paſſeth away, and another Generation cometh.* Now theſe two ways the Heathens were capable of knowing the Truth in our Text, without the Aſſiſtance of a Divine Revelation: But we who enjoy the Word of God, have a very clear and diſtinct diſcovery, which way Death was firſt introduc'd into this lower World, as well as the Method that infinite Wiſdom has eſta-

Eccleſ. 1. 4.

bliſh'd

bliſh'd for our compleat Victory over it at laſt, *viz.* by our Bleſſed Saviour's Death and Reſurrection. By the former we took away *the Sting of Death*, and *deſtroy'd him that had the Power of Death*; and by the latter he gave us the aſſuring Pledg, and the moſt perfect Pattern of our own Reſurrection.

As to the entrance of Death into the World, St. *Paul* gives us the following account: *Wherefore by Man Sin enter'd into the World, and Death by Sin*, or for Sin; *and ſo Death paſs'd upon all Men, for that all had ſinned. For until the Law, Sin was in the World; but Sin is not imputed when there is no Law. Nevertheleſs, Death reign'd from* Adam *to* Moſes, *even over them that had not ſinned after the Similitude of* Adam's *Tranſgreſſion, who is the Figure of him that was to come.* In theſe few words the Apoſtle ſubſtantially proves, That the true Cauſe of Man's being ſubjected to the common Law of Mortality, was the Sin of *Adam*; which elſewhere he expreſly affirms, and often repeats in words very ſignificant and emphatical: *e. g.*——*Thro the Offence of one, many are dead*;——*By one Man's Offence, Death reign'd by one*;——*By the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation*;——*By one Man's Diſobedience, many were made Sinners.* So the ſame Apoſtle ſays in another Epiſtle, *That in* Adam *all die.* All which Expreſſions are of like Import with that firſt cited, *In whom all have ſinned*; from which the Apoſtle ſeems to argue after this manner: Tho all that deſcended from *Adam* in an ordinary way, had ſin'd as well as he, who was the common Parent of Mankind; yet till the giving of the Law at Mount *Sinai*, we find no

Rom. 5. 12, 13, 14.

Rom. 5. 15, 17, 18, 19.

Law

Law promulg'd, that denounc'd Death againſt all kind of Sin, but that very Law that threatned *Adam* himſelf with Death. *But of the Tree of the Knowledg of Good and Evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it; for in the Day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.* Now 'tis evident, that none of the Poſterity of *Adam* did actually violate this Law; and ſays the Apoſtle, *Sin is not imputed where there is no Law:* i. e. 'Tis not ſo charg'd upon Man, that he ſhould die for it, before there is any Law that threatens Death againſt it. *Nevertheleſs, Death reign'd from* Adam *till* Moſes, *even over them who had not ſin'd after the Similitude of* Adam's *Tranſgreſſion.* Now whether we underſtand this of Infants, or ſuch as were adult, neither of 'em did eat the forbidden Fruit, nor ſin againſt any Law that threaten'd Death to all Sinners. So that upon the whole the Apoſtle infers, that 'twas *Adam*'s Sin which did render Men obnoxious to Death: He ſin'd as the Head and common Parent of Mankind; ſo that all his Poſterity may be ſaid *to have ſin'd in him, and fallen with him in his firſt Tranſgreſſion.*

Now *Adam* having brought himſelf under the Sentence of Death by his Apoſtacy from God, 'twas impoſſible under ſuch Circumſtances, that he ſhou'd propagate an Immortal Race. So that the Living not only know that they are obnoxious to Death, but that they die for *Adam*'s Sin, and in conſequence of God's Decree and Appointment. But before I leave this Head, I would make one Remark, *viz.* That 'tis evident from Divine Revelation, that Men do as well deſerve Death for Actual, as for Original Sin. And therefore tho the *Antediluvians*, and the Men of *Sodom*, were

Heb. 9. 27.

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were ſubjected to the Law of Mortality by the Sin of *Adam*; yet the one periſh'd by Water, as the other did by Fire, becauſe of their own perſonal Rebellions againſt the Sovereign of the World.

Again, *The Living know they ſhall die*; but then their Knowledg does not extend, either to the preciſe Time, the particular Manner, or diſtinct Place of their Death: When, how, and where we ſhall die, we cannot tell. Tho each of us may ſay with *Job*, *I know thou wilt bring me to Death, and to the Houſe appointed for all Living.* Job 30. 23. And yet we may as truly ſay with good old *Iſaac*, *I know not the Day of my Death.* Gen. 27. 2. God has in great Wiſdom and Mercy conceal'd from us future Events, and particularly the Time of our own Death, and the Death of our Friends: In Mercy, I ſay, that we might not torment our ſelves with melancholy Reflections on the fatal Period, if near; nor indulge our Appetites, and ſo defer our Preparations, upon the diſtant View of our Change. If we perfectly knew the exact time of our Diſſolution, as it might diſcourage us from the vigorous purſuit of Knowledg, and the beneficial Offices of human Life; ſo probably many, *thro fear of Death, would be all their Life-time ſubject to Bondage.* Heb. 2. 25. If Men were fully aſſur'd they ſhould attain to a very great Age, it would tempt them to be careleſs of their Health, and put 'em upon undue Methods in a time of Sickneſs. If Men are ſo vicious now, when they cannot tell but they ſhall die the next Moment; into what exceſs of Riot would they run, and into what Miſchiefs would they plunge themſelves, if they had fifty or ſixty Years in view? If Men are

ſo

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ſo mad on their Luſts, that they break thro the Reſtraints of Reaſon and Religion, and all the Remonſtrances of Conſcience, when they know not but they may die in the midſt of their Follies; what wou'd theſe Wretches be, what wou'd they do, yea, what wou'd they not do, to gratify and pleaſe their ſenſual Appetites, could they be aſcertain'd of half an Age to come? Indeed, ſuch is the amazing Degeneracy of Human Nature, that Men who are enſlav'd to their Luſts, do not only take encouragement to ſin from the vain Expectation of a long Life, but are ſometimes excited with the utmoſt Violence to purſue their forbidden Pleaſures, when they apprehend that their time here will be very ſhort. Therefore when we tell the Men of Liberty and Pleaſure, who have made great Advances in Sin, that they muſt ſhortly bid an Eternal Adieu to every thing that flatters and courts their Senſes; they do like the obſtinate *Jews*, who when God had told 'em by his Prophet, that they ſhould ſhortly be cut off by his Judgments, ſaid, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall die.* And I remember, the Book of *Wiſdom* repreſents the Wicked as encouraging themſelves to be diſſolute and luxurious, from the Conſideration of the Shortneſs and Vanity of Human Life, in ſuch words as theſe: *Our Life ſhall paſs*
Wiſd. 2.4,9 *away as the Trace of a Cloud, and ſhall be diſpers'd as a Miſt that is driven away with the Beams of the Sun, and overcome with the Heat thereof. For our time is a very Shadow that paſſeth away.* —— *Come on therefore, let us enjoy the good things that are preſent; and let us ſpeedily uſe the Creatures, like as in Youth. Let us*

fill

fill our ſelves with coſtly Wine, and Ointments; and let no Flower of the Spring paſs by us. Let us crown our ſelves with Roſe-buds before they be wither'd. Let none of us go without his part of our Jollity: Let us leave Tokens of our Joyfulneſs in every place; for this is our Portion, and our Lot is this. Can any thing be more abſurd than ſuch Inferences as theſe, from the Conſideration of the Shortneſs of Life, and the Certainty of Death? Yet theſe are the celebrated Maxims of thoſe who place Happineſs in the Gratifications of the Animal Nature, and know no Pleaſures beyond thoſe of the Body. 'Tis a remarkable Paſſage which is recited by *Herodotus* * concerning *Mycerinus*, one of the Kings of *Egypt*, That when Notice was given him by an Oracle, that he had no more than ſix Years to live; finding that neither the Apologies he made for himſelf, nor the Complaints he return'd to the Oracle, could alter the Decrees of Fate, he reſolv'd to indulge himſelf in Eaſe and Luxury, to live faſt; and by turning the Nights into ſo many Days, he contriv'd to live twelve Years in ſix.

Again, Did we certainly know that upon ſuch a Day the beſt and deareſt Friend we had upon Earth would take his final leave of us, how ſhould we anticipate the ſorrows of parting, and live under continual Fear and Dread? Finally, *The Living know that they ſhall die*; but the particular Time, and the various Circumſtances thereof, are in much Goodneſs and Wiſdom conceal'd from us, that ſo we may be always ready.

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* Vid. Herodot. *lib.* 2. *Hiſt.*

Indeed

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Indeed the Holy Scripture informs us, that *Enoch* and *Elijah* had the Privilege to be exempted from the great Law of dying. Of the former 'tis ſaid, *That he walk'd with God and was not, for God took him:* and of the latter, *That he went up by a Whirlwind into Heaven.* So that their Time run into Eternity, with very little interruption; ſome there ſeems to have been, for without doubt they paſt under a very conſiderable Change, before they were admitted to the Pleaſures of the Heavenly State: For *Fleſh and Blood*, as 'tis now fram'd, faſhion'd, and corrupted, *cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.*

Gen. 5. 24. 2 Kings 2. 11.

Moreover, the ſame Apoſtle ſays, That tho *we ſhall not all ſleep*, i. e. die, yet *we ſhall be chang'd.* He ſpeaks of thoſe that ſhall be alive when our Saviour ſhall come to judg the World: Theſe Men ſhall not die like others, but ſhall paſs under a Change that ſhall be equivalent to Death, as the Scriptures in the Margin ſhew. The Apoſtle, after he had ſpoken of our Saviour's deſcending *from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and the Trump of God*, he adds, That *the Dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt: then we which are alive and remain, ſhall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air; and ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord.* But this ſhall not be till theſe Perſons have paſs'd under a Change, as appears from the above-cited Text. So that the Living know that all ſhall die, except thoſe that ſhall be alive when Chriſt comes to judg the Quick and the Dead.

1 Cor. 15. 51. 1 Theſſ. 4. 17.

I proceed now to the ſecond general Head of Diſcourſe:

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II. And that is to ſhew you, That Man's being under a neceſſity of Dying, is no Reflection either on the Wiſdom or the Goodneſs of God. And this will appear from the following Conſiderations.

1. Man being compos'd of Soul and Body, was originally liable to Diſſolution, or capable of dying, as I hinted before. Indeed if Man had never ſin'd, he would certainly never have died. But being fix'd in ſuch Circumſtances, that 'twas poſſible for him to ſin, 'twas alſo poſſible for him to die. So that with this Explication and Reſtriction we may affirm, That Man was not immortal by Nature, but was originally capable of dying. Tho I aſſert, that if Man had continu'd innocent, he ſhould never have taſted Death; and I am inclin'd to think, that human Life even then would have been continu'd after an extraordinary manner. Agreeable to this, is the Opinion of a late modern Divine *, who ſpeaking of Man whilſt innocent, ſays, He was immortal, not from everlaſting Principles of Nature, but by Divine Preſervation; of which the Tree of Life was the Ordain'd Means and Sacramental Pledge. And if ſo, 'twas purely in the Pleaſure of Almighty God, who is the Author of our Beings, and the Supreme Arbiter of Life and Death, to continue the one, or diſcontinue the other, according to his Sovereign Pleaſure. If God Almighty was under no Obligation to give us Being, he can be under none to continue the Beings that he voluntarily made out of nothing, any longer than he pleaſes. All human Creatures

* *Dr.* Bates's *Works*, p. 419.

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are as much indebted to Heaven for their Conſervation, as they are for their Exiſtence. Now if the matter be as I have ſtated it; if our Bodies were not originally immortal, but capable in their own Nature of Diſſolution; to be ſure it cannot be inconſiſtent with the Juſtice or Goodneſs of God, either to ſuſpend, or to beſtow an Immortality, which is a ſupernatural Privilege, upon what Terms he pleaſes. 'Tis allow'd by all, beſide the Obligations which *Adam* was under to keep the Moral Law, from his natural Relation to God as a Creator, that God reſtrain'd him by a poſitive Law from eating of the Tree of Knowledg of Good and Evil; and at the ſame time gave him the higheſt Aſſurance in the World, that his Abſtinence ſhould be rewarded with Immortality. Now for the Accompliſhment of this, and that the Decays of Nature might be prevented, or at leaſt repair'd, that a Man made of Duſt might not be reduc'd to Duſt again; 'tis the Opinion of many Divines, that the Tree of Life, planted in the midſt of Paradiſe, had a Virtue in it that would render human Bodies (naturally capable of Death) durable and immortal. But *Adam* having actually violated the Divine Law, by eating of the forbidden Fruit, God cuts him off from the Privilege which he might have enjoy'd by the Tree of Life; and left him not only to the ordinary Courſe of Nature, but pronounc'd upon him the Sentence of Death. And I preſume all Men will allow, that upon *Adam*'s Diſobedience and Apoſtacy, 'twas no Impeachment of the Divine Juſtice to chaſe him out of Paradiſe, and to deprive him wholly of the uſe of the Tree of Life. Now if *Adam* was not immor-

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immortal by Nature, and if he forfeited his ſupernatural Privilege of Immortality by his Sin, I think 'tis evident, even to Demonſtration, that God has done us no Injuſtice, by appointing Man once to die.

2. If we reflect upon the Moral and Penal Evils that attend the beſt of Men in this World, we ſhall ſee much more reaſon to admire both the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, in laying us under a neceſſity of Dying, than to reflect on either of theſe Attributes, becauſe God has appointed Man once to die. Here good Men are not only tempted to ſin, but frequently overcome by the Tempter: *They find a Law in their Members warring againſt the Law of their Minds, and frequently carrying them into Captivity to the Law of Sin, which is in their Members.* Rom. 7. 23. Now we ſhall never be perfectly freed from indwelling Sin, till the moment of our Diſſolution. Moreover, as long as Sin is in the World, it will be follow'd with a Train of Miſeries: Indeed ſome People are not expos'd to ſo many and ſo great Troubles as others; yet Men indefinitely are *born to Trouble, as the Sparks fly upward.* Man *that is born of a Woman, is of few Days, and full of Trouble.* Job 14. 1. Now ſince Man in no State of Life here can be entirely freed from Sin, and perfectly exempt from Troubles, even of various kinds; 'tis ſo far from being any juſt Reflection upon the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, that Man is made ſubject to Death, that 'tis an unſpeakable Mercy to all good Men, that they are oblig'd to drop theſe Bodies, with which they put off the Body of Sin, and have an Opportunity to *reſt in their Beds*; I mean, to lie down in the Iſa. 57. 2.

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Job 3. 17. Grave, *where the Wicked ceaſe from Troubling, and where the Weary are at Reſt.*

3. The Ends of the Divine Government upon Earth are admirably ſerv'd, by this Decree and Diſpenſation concerning the Mortality of Man. God's Deſign in governing the World, is the real Benefit of Rational Beings, as well as the Advancement of the Glory of his own Attributes and Perfections. If Men run riot in Sin now, and are prodigiouſly wicked, tho they know they ſhall die, and they cannot reaſonably expect to live beyond the common Standard of Human Life; what a Hell would this Earth be, if inhabited with innumerable Myriads of immortal Sinners! 'Tis more than probable, that the extraordinary Wickedneſs of the Old World, which provok'd God to deſtroy all but eight Perſons, was very much promoted by the long Lives of wicked Men, who had ſo many and ſo great Opportunities of corrupting thoſe they convers'd with: And therefore it has been frequently obſerv'd, that when God promis'd *Noah*, that there ſhould never be ſuch another Deluge as to deſtroy all Fleſh, he ſaw it neceſſary, after the Flood, to contract Human Life; that Men might not have ſo many Opportunities of tempting one another to Sin, and of advancing the Intereſts of Satan's Kingdom, as the *Antediluvians* had.

4. Good Men cannot receive a conſummate Reward in this Life, nor bad Men be expos'd to the utmoſt Miſeries their Sins have deſerv'd: for if wicked Men were to be puniſh'd here according to their Deſerts, who could bear the thoughts of continuing in this World, which would ſo much reſemble that Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, where the Worm never dies, nor is the Fire

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Fire ever quench'd? Indeed God does ſometimes, in the Courſe of his Providence, put a viſible difference betwixt the Righteous and the Wicked, even in this Life: But the compleat Happineſs of the one, and the perfect Miſery of the other, cannot be adminiſtred here, but is reſerv'd for the other State into which Men enter at Death. What God can do, if he'd act out of his ordinary way, by a Series of Miracles, thro the Ages of Eternity, is not for us to determine; but according to his eſtabliſh'd Methods of Government, and the Nature and Order of Things, the Glory of God, and the Happineſs of Mankind, is beſt ſecur'd by his appointing Man once to die.

5. If God had not determin'd that Men ſhould die, the World would have been overſtock'd with People many Ages ago: And what would have follow'd upon this, but while Men could have ſubſiſted, the firſt Poſſeſſors would have been Princes, and the generality of their Deſcendants Beggars? For 'tis not to be imagin'd that they who had been in poſſeſſion of an Eſtate three or four thouſand Years, would conſent to quit their Right, while living, to younger Branches of the Family. And if the Poor are ſo numerous and full of Complaints now, both would have increas'd in proportion, or elſe all People muſt have been upon a level, and all Civil Diſtinctions loſt; and inſtead of well-govern'd Communities, the whole World would have been one confus'd Mob. Moreover, 'tis eaſy to make it appear, even to Demonſtration, that if there had not been a Succeſſion of Funerals, as well as Births, the whole Globe of the Earth would not have contain'd the infinite Numbers that would have

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been produc'd from *Adam* to this day. Nor could the Earth have furniſh'd a Supply; ſo that the Inhabitants muſt either have died with Famine, or have been ſuſtain'd by Miracles. No one therefore has the leaſt ſhadow of Reaſon to reflect either on the Goodneſs or the Wiſdom of God, for decreeing that Man ſhould die; eſpecially if we conſider,

In the ſixth and laſt place, The infallible Aſſurance that God has given all good Men, of a joyful Reſurrection to Eternal Life. And this was done very early; for ſo amazing was the Divine Goodneſs, that the Promiſe was exhibited before the Sentence of Death was denounc'd on our firſt Parents. For tho they had forfeited their Immortality by their Sin, and highly diſpleas'd and provok'd the great Sovereign of the World: yet before God ſaid to
Gen. 3. 19. them, *Duſt thou art, and to Duſt thou ſhalt return*; he promiſes the Meſſiah, and ſays to Satan, *I will put an Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed; it ſhall bruiſe thy Head, and thou ſhalt bruiſe his Heel.* In which words we have the Goſpel, as it were, in Miniature: for both Jewiſh and Chriſtian Interpreters have acknowledg'd, that this Promiſe did refer to the Meſſiah; and in it there is a very plain intimation, not only that the Son of God ſhould aſſume Human Nature, and ſuffer in it, but that his Succeſs ſhould be glorious, that he ſhould deſtroy the Power of Satan, and be the Author of eternal Redemption to his People. Indeed 'tis objected, That [*Seed*] ſignifies a Nation, or Number of Perſons; as when God promiſes the Meſſiah,
Iſa. 53. 10. that he *ſhall ſee his Seed.* In return to which, I ſay, That tho *Seed* be a Noun of Multitude,

yet

yet we find it apply'd in Scripture to a ſingle Perſon; as when *Seth* is call'd *another Seed.* Gen. 24. 25. And agreeably to this, is the way of arguing the Apoſtle uſes in his Epiſtle to the *Galatians:* Gal. 3. 16. *Now to* Abraham *and his Seed were the Promiſes made. He ſaith not, And to Seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Chriſt.* St. *Paul* argues from the Words being in the Singular Number, becauſe 'tis *Seed* *, and not *Seeds*; therefore it ſignifies one Perſon, and not more; and that Perſon is Chriſt. Now ſince Mankind had this early Aſſurance of the Incarnation of the Son of God, and that in the Human Nature he ſhould overcome Satan, or as the Author to the *Hebrews* expreſſes it, *Deſtroy him who had the Power of Death, that is the Devil, and deliver them, who thro fear of Death, were all their Life-time ſubject to Bondage:* I ſay, this is ſuch an Inſtance of amazing Goodneſs, as may juſtly raiſe the Admiration of Men and Angels, that an offended Deity ſhould promiſe the great Bleſſing of a perfect Saviour to Rebels, before he denounces againſt 'em a Threatning for their Diſobedience.

The Doctrine of the Reſurrection is plainly reveal'd in the Old Teſtament, tho various Circumſtances concerning that Event are ſet in a clearer Light by the New. *Job* is expreſs with reference to this great Article of Faith: *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and tho after my Skin, Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my* Job 19. 25, 26.

* *Indeed* R. Iſaac *makes ſome ſpiteful Remarks on the Apoſtle upon this Occaſion, which are fully confuted by Biſhop* Kidder, *in his 2d Part of his Demonſtration of the Meſſiah*, p. 256.

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Fleſh ſhall I ſee God: whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and my Eyes ſhall behold, and not another, tho my Reins be conſum'd within me. Which Words cannot be interpreted in a figurative and improper Senſe, without ſome Force and Violence. And 'tis certain they were underſtood in a literal Senſe in the Apoſtolical Age; for I find 'em cited by * *Clemens Romanus*, to prove the Reſurrection of Human Bodies. Again,

Dan. 12. 2. the Prophet *Daniel* affirms, That *many of them who ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth ſhall awake, ſome to Everlaſting Life, and ſome to Shame and Everlaſting Contempt.* This Text indeed is underſtood metaphorically by a very learned † Interpreter, tho in this he oppoſes the moſt learned of the ‖ *Jews*.

But, I ſay, the New Teſtament ſets this matter in a clear Light, and gives us an account of various very conſiderable Circumſtances in reference to this Event, which had been conceal'd from the World in Ages paſt: 'Tis this part of Divine Revelation aſſures us, *That Chriſt hath aboliſh'd Death, and brought Life and Immortality to Light thro the Goſpel*; the meaning of which words ſeems to be this, that Chriſt has virtually, and in effect, aboliſh'd Death. For tho we are yet ſubject to the common Law of Morality, and muſt take the Grave in our way to Heaven, yet at length Death ſhall

Rom. 14. 9. be ſwallow'd up in Victory: *For this end Chriſt both died, and roſe, and reviv'd, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and the Living*; ſo as to raiſe them up at the laſt Day, he having an unalienable Right and Propriety in 'em. *He hath*

* Ad Corinth. Epiſt. p. 58. † Grotius.
‖ Vid. Manaſſeh Ben Iſrael, De Reſurrectione.

aboliſh'd

aboliſh'd Death: The * original Word ſignifies not always the taking away the thing it preciſely refers to, but a deſtroying the Power of that thing, and ſo making it in effect as tho it were not at all; as the Scriptures at the bottom fully ſhew. Moreover, by this Phraſe of *Chriſt's having aboliſh'd Death*, we are to underſtand not only the Victory he obtain'd over it in his own Perſon, who, after he was dead and bury'd, rais'd himſelf from the Dead, the Bonds of Death not being able to hold him: but farther, we are to conſider, that Chriſt both died and roſe from the Dead, as a publick Head and Repreſentative; and by his Reſurrection has given us Aſſurance, that we alſo ſhall be rais'd from the Dead at the laſt Day. Chriſt has taken the whole Diſpoſal of Death into his own hands: *I am he that liveth, and was dead*; Rev. 1. 18. *and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the Keys of Hell and of Death.* Our Bleſſed Saviour has the moſt indiſputable Right and uncontrolable Power to diſpoſe of all Perſons, with reſpect to their future State: And that is not all, but Death is alter'd in its nature to a good Man; and the Apoſtle repreſents Believers not only as reconcil'd to Death, but as triumphing over it, in theſe words: *O Death,* 1 Cor. 15. *where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory?* —— *Thanks be to God which giveth us the Victory thro our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Death has loſt its Power, ſo that it cannot finally deſtroy: For our Saviour having been made the *Firſt-Fruits of them that ſlept*, his Reſurrection, which is paſt, is a certain Pattern, and an aſſuring Pledg of ours which is to come. The

† Καταργήσαι, Rom. 4. 14. Rom. 7. 2. Gal. 5. 4.

Victory

Victory obtain'd by the Head, gives ſure and certain Hopes that the Members ſhall not always remain under the Power of Death. When the Prophet *Hoſea* perſonates our Bleſſed Saviour, and would repreſent the Greatneſs of his Conqueſt, and the Glory of his Triumphs over the laſt Enemy, he introduces him as uttering theſe words: *I will ranſom them from the Grave, I will redeem them from Death: O Death, I'll be thy Plagues; O Grave, I'll be thy Deſtruction; Repentance ſhall be hid from mine Eyes.* All good Men will find this Promiſe partly accompliſh'd at Death, tho its abſolute Completion will be reſerv'd to the firſt Reſurrection; for then *this Corruptible ſhall have put on Incorruption, and this Mortal ſhall have put on Immortality: and then,* ſays the Apoſtle, *ſhall be brought to paſs that Saying which was written, Death is ſwallow'd up in Victory.* And a noble Victory ſhall the whole Body of the Elect obtain, when they are perfectly reſcu'd from the Captivity of the Grave, and have entirely ſhook off the Diſhonours of Mortality and Corruption: For *Chriſt ſhall change their vile Bodies, that they may be faſhion'd like unto his glorious Body, according to the working whereby he is able even to ſubdue all things unto himſelf.* Now is it reaſonable that any ſhould complain they are ſubjected to the common Law of Mortality for the firſt *Adam*'s Sin; ſince the ſecond *Adam* has given the moſt infallible Aſſurance that he will raiſe 'em from the Dead, and beſtow upon 'em a better Immortality than Man would have enjoy'd if he had continu'd innocent? Therefore let none cenſure the Goodneſs or the Wiſdom of the Divine Government, and complain of Man's being under a Neceſſity

Hoſ. 13. 14.

of

of Dying; *For ſince by Man came Death, by Man came alſo the Reſurrection of the Dead.* 1 Cor. 15. 21.

I proceed now to the Third general Head of Diſcourſe.

III. Whence is it that the Generality of People neglect their Preparation for Death, tho they certainly know they ſhall die?

Now the Cauſes of this fatal Miſmanagement are very various, according to Mens different Inclinations, and the different Principles by which they govern themſelves. I ſhall not therefore pretend to enumerate every particular Cauſe which has an influence into this ill Conduct; but ſhall mention ſeveral things which are very comprehenſive, to which other Matters may be eaſily reduc'd. And,

1. Groſs Ignorance is one Cauſe why People neglect to prepare for their great Change. They know indeed 'tis approaching, and that 'twill certainly overtake 'em; yet ſo groſs is the Ignorance and Stupidity of the greateſt part of Mankind, that they put the evil Day far from them, and wretchedly neglect the grand Affair of Life, I mean, to prepare for Death. Indeed, in Scripture, Ignorance is taken notice of as the common Source of all Sin. God reſolves the Wickedneſs of the *Jewiſh* Nation under the Old Teſtament, into their Ignorance; *For they are a Nation void of Counſel, neither is there any Underſtanding in them.* Deut. 32. 28. And under the New Teſtament, the Crucifixion of our Bleſſed Saviour is charg'd upon the Ignorance of the ſame People; *For had they known it,* ſays the Apoſtle, *they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.* 1 Cor. 2. 8. And I obſerve, that the Error of a numerous Sect among the *Jews,* who

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who disbeliev'd the Reſurrection of the Dead, Mat. 22. 29. is ſaid to have the like Source: *Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the Power of God.* And when St. *Paul* would deſcribe the true Cauſe of the great Degeneracy of the Gentile World, in that they committed Laſciviouſneſs with Greedineſs, he ſays, 'twas becauſe of the Eph. 4. 18, 19. *Blindneſs of their Hearts.* And St. *John* tells us, John 3. 11. *That he that doth Evil, hath not ſeen God*; *i. e.* He is ignorant, and has no true Knowledg of God and his Perfections. Now as Sin in general ſprings from a Defect in the Underſtanding, ſo this complicated Evil of neglecting to prepare for Death, is owing to the ſame Cauſe.

How ignorant are abundance of People both concerning God and themſelves! 'Tis almoſt incredible, that rational Creatures ſhould live without reflecting on their own Beings or Circumſtances, or without conſidering the Perfections of that God who firſt caus'd them to exiſt. Yet a very little Obſervation upon the Conduct of Human Life, will furniſh us with too many proofs of this. Is any thing more common than for thoſe, who are in a State of Nature, under the Curſe of a broken Covenant of Works, and who in the Language of our Saviour are *condemn'd already*, to paſs away their Time in Mirth and Jollity, as if they were in as happy Circumſtances as any People in the World? And whence does this ariſe, but from Ignorance? People are inſenſible how they are corrupted and deprav'd by the Fall, and how much worſe their Circumſtances are made by their actual Tranſgreſſions of the Divine Law. Now, I ſay, tho the Living know they ſhall die, yet being ignorant of the infinite Danger to

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to which they are expos'd by their Sins, they rather treaſure up Wrath againſt the Day of Wrath, than labour to be found of Chriſt in Peace, without Spot and Blame, in the Day of God. For while Men are ſtupidly ignorant of God and themſelves, and are intire Strangers to the Method of Salvation, which is eſtabliſh'd in the Goſpel, thro the meritorious Suffering of the Son of God; no wonder if they defer their Preparation for Death and Judgment. No one would be ſollicitous about a Saviour, till he is ſenſible that he is a loſt Sinner, and has his Mind deeply impreſs'd with a Senſe of the exceeding Sinfulneſs of his Sins, as they are oppoſite to the pure Nature and the perfect Word of God.

Too many take up with this general Notion: We are indeed Sinners, but then Chriſt dy'd for Sinners, and God is merciful to Sinners; and we doubt not but he will be ſo to us. Theſe Men are ready, with the *Jews* of old, to *bleſs themſelves in their Heart, ſaying, We ſhall have Peace, tho we walk in the Imaginations of our Heart, to add Drunkenneſs to Thirſt.* Never conſidering that the Promiſes of Pardon and Eternal Life are made only to believing Penitents: As that Scripture imports in the Prophet, *Let the Wicked forſake his Way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and he will have Mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Deut. 29. 19. Iſa. 55. 7.

Before I paſs this Head, I cannot but remark, That even amongſt Men of an extraordinary Genius and a vaſt Compaſs of Knowledg, their Miſmanagement with reſpect to another Life is owing to their Ignorance: and tho this looks like venturing on a Paradox, yet 'tis too evident

dent to be deny'd. The Diſcourſe of a Learned Ruler among the *Jews* concerning the new Birth, recorded in the Goſpel of St. *John*, does not diſcover a little Ignorance. And if our modern Libertines, who dare lampoon the Office of the Holy Spirit, and repreſent his renewing and ſanctifying Work, as Viſion and the Spleen; I ſay, if ſuch Men cannot bear to be thought ſo ignorant as *Nicodemus*, I am ſure they are more profane: concerning whom
Deut. 32.29. I ſhall only ſay at preſent, *O that they were wiſe, that they underſtood this, that they wou'd conſider their latter End!* Let Men boaſt ever ſo much of their Wit, they are utter Strangers to true Wiſdom, who lay aſide all Thoughts of a future State, and neglect to prepare for the Inviſible World. The Wiſdom of a Man does not only appear in the Choice of a right End, but in the vigorous Uſe of thoſe Means, which are moſt proper for the attaining of his End. So that whatſoever Excuſes Men may frame for deferring their Preparation for Death; 'tis very evident, that one true Cauſe of it is a ſtupid Ignorance of God and themſelves, and of that Eternal State into which they are haſtning.

2. Another Cauſe of Peoples ill Conduct in this moſt important Affair, is Scepticiſm and Unbelief, with reſpect to a future State of Rewards and Puniſhments. One would think that Men ſhould not want to be confirm'd in the Doctrine of a future State, or that any ſhou'd have Doubts concerning the Diſtribution of Rewards and Puniſhments after this Life, who have the Goſpel in their hands, which has brought Life and Immortality to Light.

Indeed

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Indeed thoſe Philoſophers among the Antients, who were vicious, have done their utmoſt to perſuade themſelves and others that the Matter was doubtful; tho after all the Diſguiſes they could invent, and the Colour of Reaſon they gave to their Diſcourſes, they could not but own, that the Doctrine of future Rewards for good Men, was more probable than the contrary. For indeed if we abſtract from the Conſideration of that Diſcovery which is made of a future State by the Holy Scriptures, we have from Principles of Reaſon a much better Aſſurance that good Men ſhall be rewarded in a Life to come, than we have of many other things in this World, which yet have an extraordinary Influence both on our Minds and Manners. For this might be accounted for, from the Juſtice and Wiſdom of God's governing Providence, from the Nature of our Souls as Rational and Immortal Beings, together with the Deſires which ſeem to be interwoven with the very Frame and Conſtitution of our Minds; to which might be added, the Capacity God has given us to contemplate and admire him, to love and adore him. But that which is the moſt certain Proof of this matter, is the Revelation God has made by his Son, who came from Heaven with this kind Deſign; and after his Reſurrection from the Dead, did viſibly aſcend thither again, to give Aſſurance to all whom his Father had given him, that where he was, there they ſhould be alſo, to behold his Glory. Yet we have too much reaſon to fear, that many who enjoy the Goſpel-Revelation, are Scepticks in this fundamental Article of the Chriſtian Faith. And of many of thoſe who profeſs to believe the

Doctrine

Doctrine of a future State, it may rather be ſaid, that they do not disbelieve it: for what they call Faith, is but a wavering Opinion, not a cordial Aſſent, or a well-grounded Perſuaſion. Now 'tis not likely that an unſettled Opinion about theſe important Matters ſhould influence Men to prepare for that State and Life, which they do not ſteddily believe will ever come. Whereas if Men were fully perſuaded, *That ſuch who, by patient continuance in well doing, ſeek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality, ſhould obtain Eternal Life*; and, that they who are harden'd thro the Deceitfulneſs of Sin, who are fearful and unbelieving, and to every good work Reprobate, ſhould have their Portion in that Lake which burns with Fire and Brimſtone: I ſay, did Men ſteddily believe theſe things, 'tis hardly to be conceiv'd, that any under the influence of ſuch a Faith, could neglect and defer their Preparation for Death.

Faith, in the ordinary Affairs of this Life, is a great Principle of Action, and will puſh Men on to enterprize things very difficult and hazardous. But how much ſtronger Influence then ſhould the Faith of the Goſpel have upon our Conduct, ſince the Objects which the Chriſtian Revelation propoſes, either to raiſe our Hope, or excite our Fear, are in their different Natures infinitely tranſcending any thing which the God of this World can preſent, either to pleaſe or terrify us?

Could we by Faith look on thoſe things which are not ſeen, and make them preſent to our Minds, tho diſtant and future; were we firmly perſuaded that a State of inconceivable Happineſs awaits all good Men, and that all who are finally diſobedient and impenitent, ſhall

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ſhall not only be excluded God's Eternal Reſt, but doom'd to ſuffer the Vengeance of Everlaſting Fire: I ſay, did we as verily believe theſe things, as if Heaven were open to our View, and the Covering taken off from Deſtruction, as if we heard the Hallelujahs of the Sav'd, and the Groans of the Damn'd; how eaſily ſhould we repel all the fiery Darts of the Devil? With what contempt ſhould we look down upon the vaniſhing Glories of this World? and with how great Abhorrence reject all thoſe Temptations which were deſign'd to draw us into Sin, and hinder our Preparation for the inviſible State? But,

3. Another Cauſe why Men procraſtinate their Repentance, and delay their Preparation for Death, is the want of ſerious Conſideration. For tho a Man may have a competent Knowledg of God and of himſelf, and be very ſenſible of the great Evil of Sin, and that his Guilt can only be expiated by the Sacrifice of the Son of God; and that there is a future State of Rewards and Puniſhments: Yet if this Perſon does not ſeriouſly conſider theſe things, ſo as to have his Mind deeply impreſs'd with an aweful Senſe of them, he'll perſevere in his Negligence, and make no Proviſion for the Eternal World. Inconſiderate People often cheat themſelves with the Appearances of Happineſs; for they look no farther than the Surface of things, and like the ignorant Pilot, if the Face of the Waters be ſmooth, have no apprehenſion of Dangers which are out of ſight. 'Tis want of Conſideration which makes Men confident and careleſs. For tho People believe that God is, and that He is a Rewarder of them who diligently ſeek him; that Man

is a frail dying Creature, that he has his Foundation in the Duſt, and is cruſh'd before the Moth; that the Wicked at death ſhall go away into Everlaſting Puniſhment, but the Righteous into Life Eternal: Yet if Men do not heartily advert to this Knowledg and Faith, and conſider theſe things with all the Seriouſneſs and deep Concern which Matters of ſuch infinite Importance require; they will ſtill continue negligent and remiſs in their Preparation for Death and Judgment. For the ſtrongeſt and moſt powerful Arguments in the World ſignify nothing to Men who will not conſider. 'Tis impoſſible that an Argument ſhould gain our Aſſent, till it is duly attended to, and weigh'd. All Arguments are propos'd to us, as we are rational Beings; and as ſuch it becomes us to conſider the Mediums that are offer'd, without which we ſhall always miſtake in our Conduct.

Indeed the generality of the World are ſo immers'd in Senſuality, that they are not mov'd with any thing but what courts their Senſes: and that which is not groſs enough to regale them, they think, is too abſtracted to be conſider'd. And no wonder, while People thus ſuffer themſelves to be govern'd by their Appetites, and to be exceſſively tranſported with preſent Enjoyments, if they neglect preparing for a future State.

4. Another Cauſe of Mens delaying in the great and neceſſary Work of Life, is their prevailing Love to this preſent World, and thoſe Enjoyments which ſtrike hard on their Senſes. This World is a very great Snare to the generality of People, who love it ſo paſſionately that it engroſſes the whole of their Thoughts

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Thoughts and Time. Some paſs away the greateſt part of their Lives in Diverſion and Pleaſure, while others are wholly taken up with Buſineſs. The former conſider which way they may ſpend an Eſtate, ſo as to gratify their ſenſual Appetites; and the latter how they may raiſe an Eſtate, to ſooth a covetous Humour: and both of them, tho differently influenc'd, yet neglect the *One thing needful*, and defer their Preparation for Death and Judgment.

Alas, could we proportion our Eſteem to the Worth of things, we ſhould not be ſo miſtaken in our Choice, nor be ſo exceedingly fond of the vaniſhing Glories of the preſent Life. But few Men keep ſo ſtrict a guard upon their Paſſions as they ought: and therefore thoſe things which are ſenſible and preſent, too commonly ſteal away their Hearts, and make them forget themſelves, and the greateſt Concern they have in this World; I mean, to prepare for the other. The Amuſements of Senſe diſſipate our Minds, and prevent us from making thoſe ſerious Reflections on our Frailty which become us; ſo that the greateſt part of our Lives ordinarily runs out, either before we are capable of juſt Reflections, or elſe in the purſuit of thoſe things which are foreign to our higheſt Intereſt. Indeed, *The Luſt of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life*, make Impreſſions very different on Mens Minds, according to their Conſtitutions and Inclinations, and the various Circumſtances of their Lives. However, the generality of People are vigorous in their different Purſuits; they have ſo paſſionate a regard to things Temporal, that they wholly neglect thoſe of a Spi- 1 John 2. 16.

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ritual and Eternal Nature: They labour Night and Day for the *Meat which periſhes*, but uſe no Induſtry for that which *endures to Eternal Life.*

Thus it was with the rich Epicure in the Goſpel, his Thoughts were wholly taken up with the Affairs of this World; and he concluded, he had ſo made his Fortunes, that he might promiſe himſelf many merry and pleaſant Years to come: *Soul*, ſays he, *thou haſt*
Luke 12.19. *much Goods laid up for many Years, take thine Eaſe; eat, drink, and be merry.* The Man ſeems to ſpeak with a very pleaſing Air; not that we are to imagine, the Wealth he had amaſs'd together had given him intire Satisfaction: for a Man may as well be fed and nouriſh'd by a Dream, as render'd compleatly happy by the Enjoyments of this Life. And 'tis remarkable in the Inſtance before us, that this rich Man had very anxious Thoughts about
Luke 12. 17, 18. keeping what he had gotten. *He thought within himſelf, ſaying, What ſhall I do, becauſe I have no room where to beſtow my Fruits? And he ſaid, This I will do; I will pull down my Barns, and will build greater, and there will I beſtow all my Fruits and my Goods.* Here's deep concern in contriving what ſhall be done; and the Reſolution he takes up hereupon, could not be executed without great Care and Fatigue, together with a vaſt Expence of Time and Mony: beſides, a thouſand things might defeat the Deſign, deſtroy the Goods, and remove the Owner. And indeed the Parable mentions the laſt of theſe, as putting a ſudden Period to the ſenſual Triumphs of this vain Man: *For*
Ver. 20. *God ſaid to him, Thou Fool, this Night thy Soul ſhall be requir'd of thee; then whoſe ſhall theſe things*

be

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be which thou haſt provided? And our Saviour adds, *So is he that layeth up Treaſure for himſelf, and is not rich towards God.* Yet how many ſuch imprudent Perſons are there in the World, the whole of whoſe Time is divided betwixt Pleaſure and Buſineſs, till Death opens a new Scene, and their unprepar'd Souls are ſummon'd before the aweful Tribunal of the Son of God? 'Twas a melancholy Conſideration to him who was not awaken'd to a Senſe of his Folly, till he lay on his Death-bed, who then expreſs'd himſelf after this manner: "I "have taken care to leave my Family in good "Circumſtances, my Children will have plen-"tiful Fortunes; but I have made no Provi-"ſion for my own Soul: I have laid up no "Treaſure in Heaven. Miſerable Creature "that I am! I muſt now take leave of all my "Poſſeſſions, and loſe my Soul for ever." Indeed 'tis neceſſary that People take care of their Families, and *lay up for their Children:* but if theſe things take up the whole of their Time, they'll repent it when 'tis too late, and find the Truth of that which the Wiſe Man has long ſince obſerv'd; *Riches profit not in the Day of Wrath, but Righteouſneſs delivereth from Death.*

Ver. 21.

2 Cor. 12. 14.

Prov. 11. 4.

This World, which we ſo much admire, is doom'd to be diſſolv'd, and the Faſhion of it is continually paſſing away: The Scenes are often ſhifting, and the Perſons who appear to day vigorous and ſtrong, to morrow become weak like other Mortals, and are brought down to the ſides of the Pit. What an infinite Folly then is it to be exceſſively fond of this World, which cannot continue long, and which we muſt ſhortly leave; and intirely neg-

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left our Preparation for the other World, into which we must suddenly pass, and where we must for ever dwell? If we could be prevail'd upon to judg according to the nature of things, and to think of this World and all those Enjoyments which are bounded by Time, as we shall do when we are on the Confines of Eternity; we should not neglect to prepare for our great Change, which will certainly come, and for ought we know may be very near. 'Tis said of a very learned * Man, that when he lay on his Death-bed, and some about him were admiring the Monuments of his Learning, and the vast Pains he had been at, he reply'd, *Ah! I have lost my time of Life in a busy Idleness.* And † another who was admirable for his Literature as well as Piety, in the Close of his Days, said, *I repent of all my Life, but that part of it I spent in Communion with God and doing Good.* To close this Head: Whenever you are in danger of being deluded by the faint Images of Happiness, I mean the transient Glorys of the present Life, considerately revolve in your Thoughts those Words of our Saviour:

Mat. 16. 26. *What is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?*

5. Another Cause why Men delay their Preparation for Death, tho they certainly know they shall die, is an Apprehension they have that 'tis a melancholy and troublesom Work. This World is generally thought to be a very pleasant and agreeable Place, especially by

* *Grotius.* Ah! vitam perdidi operose, nihil agendo.
† *Dr.* Donne.

those

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thoſe who proſper in it, and have all that Heart can wiſh. Now Men who are paſſionately fond of this Life, cannot bear to hear of Death, eſpecially if they ever dare reflect upon their Guilt, and the Expectations which are immediately rais'd hereupon. 'Tis an Expreſſion of the Son of *Syrach: O Death, how bitter is the Remembrance of thee to a Man that liveth at Reſt in his Poſſeſſions, unto the Man that hath nothing to vex him, and that hath Proſperity in all things!* The Thoughts of Death are very troubleſom to proſperous Sinners; which makes them put the evil Day far from them, and delay their Repentance and Reformation. They imagine that if they ſhould ſet about this Work, it would damp all the Joys of Life, that it would infuſe a Bitterneſs into their pleaſant Cups, that it would interrupt them in the purſuit of the World, and deprive them of thoſe Diverſions which are dearer to them than Life it ſelf.

The Generality of People ſuppoſe, that Meditations on Death are only proper for the Sick and Aged, and very unſutable for thoſe who are in health, eſpecially for ſuch as are in the flouriſhing Bloom of Youth; forgetting the Brevity and Uncertainty of Human Life. Nor can any thing be more abſurd and unreaſonable than for People to delay their Preparation for Death, when Life is ſo uncertain, upon a Pretence that 'tis a melancholy and difficult Work. Methinks all rational Men ſhould rather put this Queſtion to their Souls: Is the Work I am preſs'd to undertake abſolutely neceſſary? And if it appears to be ſo, that ſingle Conſideration ſhould ſuperſede all other Pleas, and overballance any Excuſes which

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Men may frame to delay it. For what is absolutely neceſſary, ought to be enter'd upon immediately, leſt we never have an Opportunity to effect it. "Well, but ſays a young "and proſperous Sinner, if I immediately en- "ter on preparing for another Life, I muſt "bid adieu to all the Comforts of this, I "muſt be doom'd to an abſurd and perpe- "tual Melancholy. What! muſt I, who am "an Heir to a great Eſtate, and have but "juſt began to taſte the Pleaſures of Life; "muſt I have my Expectations diſappointed, "and my Deſires of Fame and Gallantry de- "feated? Muſt I be ſtop'd in my Purſuits, "check'd in my Race of Glory, and forbid- "den thoſe Pleaſures which I value above all "things beſides?" Miſtaken unhappy Man! Religion does not abridg thee of any Pleaſure, truly rational and manly: The Scriptures only interdict thoſe Gratifications which are ſordid and baſe; the wiſeſt of Men aſſures us, *That the Ways of Religion are Ways of Pleaſantneſs, and that all her Paths are Peace*; but *that the Way of Tranſgreſſors is hard.* Now we have all the reaſon in the World to believe *Solomon*, as well on the account of his Experience as his Inſpiration; for *he gave his Heart to know Madneſs and Folly.* He ventur'd on the forbidden Delights of Sin, as well as taſted the real and refin'd Pleaſures of Religion. So that upon the whole, we may conclude, that wicked Men take more pains to gratify their Luſts, and to ſerve the Devil, than good Men do to prepare themſelves for Death and Judgment. But,

6. Another Cauſe why People delay their Preparation for Death, is from a vain Opinion that

that they have time enough before them, and conſequently flatter themſelves with the expectation of a long Life. If Perſons are young, they are ready to conclude of courſe, that they muſt live to be old; tho they ſee Thouſands younger than they fall at their right and their left hand. They who are old think, Surely ſince we have held out thus long, there will be an addition of ſome more Years to our Lives. And thus both agree to delay preparing for Death; tho the Scripture is expreſs, *That Man that is born of a Woman is of few Days, and full of Trouble*; and that *Man in his beſt Eſtate is altogether Vanity*. How many of our own Relations and Acquaintance have gone down to the Grave, with their *Breaſts full of Milk, and their Bones moiſten'd with Marrow?* Yet obſtinate Sinners, notwithſtanding the notice God gives them in his Word, and the repeated Warnings he affords them in the Courſe of his Providence, and the Obſervation they are forc'd to make themſelves concerning the Uncertainty of Human Life, will defer their Preparation for Death, and promiſe themſelves many Years to come; as if their Times were not in God's hands, but in their own.

Before I paſs this Head, I cannot but remark, That ſome Peoples Delays are too much owing to the barbarous Flattery of Friends and Phyſicians; who pretend, in complaiſance, to tell People, that they are not in danger of Death, and that they diſcern no mortal Symptom upon them, and that they may recover, when they know 'tis utterly impoſſible they ſhould without a Miracle. And ſo many pleaſe themſelves with the hopes of living, till Death defeats their Expectations, and Divine Juſtice

Juſtice conſigns 'em over to everlaſting Burnings.

Laſtly, Another Cauſe of Peoples delaying to prepare for Death, tho they know they ſhall die, is from a vain Opinion that this Work may be effectually done upon a Death-Bed. Now there are two Inſtances which Sinners commonly plead in excuſe for the delay of their Repentance and Reformation: One is, that of the Labourers who enter'd not into the Vineyard till the eleventh Hour, and yet receiv'd as much as thoſe who had born the Heat and Burden of the Day: And the other is, that of a Thief, who was converted on the Croſs, while dying by the ſide of our Saviour. From whence obſtinate Sinners argue after this manner: If God is the ſame kind and merciful Being, which he was in Ages paſt, then we have as much reaſon to believe he will receive us to his Favour, as he did others, who repented not till the Evening of their Lives; for *what has been, may be.* So that they conclude they may very ſafely put off providing for the other World, till they are juſt going out of this.

To which I return in general, That when we argue from Precedents, it ought to be conſider'd, whether the Circumſtances of each are parallel: for the Force of what is pleaded depends upon the likeneſs of the Caſe we argue for, to that Example we argue from. But if the Caſes are not parallel, if they do not exactly reſemble each other, 'tis very bad reaſoning to infer the ſame things from one as the other. And this I apprehend to be in both the Caſes before us.

As

As to the Labourers who enter'd at the eleventh Hour, we do not read that they were call'd before; and if ſo, it does not reſemble the common Caſe of delaying Sinners, who have been deaf to the repeated Calls of God both in his Word and Providence.

As to the Caſe of the penitent Thief, there is ſomething in every Circumſtance of it peculiar and extraordinary; and therefore it cannot juſtly be argu'd from, to excuſe the Procraſtination of Sinners in common. What tho we read of a Man's being converted but a little before his Death; we have no promiſe to aſſure us, that if we delay preparing for the other World, it ſhall ſucceed with us as well as the laſt. Beſides, this Thief had ſix Hours time to conſider what he had been doing, whither he was going, and what was neceſſary to fit him for another World: but no delaying preſumptuous Sinner can be ſure of ſix Minutes to come. Again, The Converſion of this Thief ſeems to have been the firſt-Fruits of the Blood of the Croſs, a Miracle of ſovereign diſtinguiſhing Grace, whereby our Saviour would honour the Ignominy of his Death; to ſhow, that while he was crucify'd in Weakneſs, there was an infinite Virtue in his Sufferings, tho he died in appearance as criminal. Moreover, ſome are of opinion, that this Thief never had the Offers of the Goſpel before; and if ſo, I am ſure he was ſo far from being a late Penitent, that he had the Honour of being an early Convert: for 'tis not reaſonable to expect a Man ſhould embrace Chriſtianity, till Chriſt has been offer'd to him in the Goſpel.

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I have not now time to mention what Prejudices lay in the way of this Man's Converſion, and how he overcame them; what a diſtinguiſhing Luſtre there was in his Faith, to own our Saviour while under a Cloud of Diſgrace, and while ſuffering the ſhameful and accurſed Death of the Croſs: to own him, I ſay, at a time when one of his Diſciples had betray'd him, another had deny'd him, and all of 'em had forſook him and fled; to own him while deſerted by his Father, and inſulted by Men and Devils. Yet none of theſe Diſcouragements hinder'd him from making an open, bold, ſolemn Confeſſion of Jeſus as Lord and Chriſt; ſo that with an extraordinary Humility, and a lively Faith, he addreſſes himſelf to his dying Saviour, *Lord, remember me when thou comeſt into thy Kingdom.* Now who that conſiders this extraordinary Caſe of the penitent Thief, can ſee any ground, from this Inſtance, to delay preparing for Eternity?

Finally, If any will yet be ſo perverſe as to venture on in a Courſe of Sin, and reſolve to take ſhelter in this Inſtance, I would intreat 'em to remember, that there was another Thief died at the ſame, under the moſt deplorable Circumſtances of Impenitency. So that there is much greater reaſon to think, if thou defer'ſt preparing for Eternity till thou art juſt finiſhing Time, that God will rather judicially harden thee, than work a Miracle for thy Converſion. How melancholy a Conſideration is it then, that any who call themſelves Chriſtians, and pretend to be the * Guides of Souls, ſhould teach People,

* Eſcobar, Soto, Morinus, Lugo, &c.

that

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that to defer their Repentance is but a venial Sin; or as others of the ſame Communion, that 'tis no Sin at all: and ſo encourage Men to delay their Repentance till brought to a Death-Bed?

Thus have I paſs'd thro the three general Heads I propos'd to inſiſt upon. And I ſee I muſt wave thoſe Inferences I deſign'd from the preceding Diſcourſe, and can only mention one, *viz.* Since the Living know they ſhall die, then 'tis the moſt reaſonable thing in the World, immediately, and without delay, to prepare for the inviſible State.

Now that I may, if poſſible, prevail with poor Sinners to do ſo, I ſhall ſuggeſt a few things briefly to their moſt ſerious Thoughts.

Conſider that nothing can be more unreaſonable and abſurd, than for Men to continue in Sin, and defer preparing for Death, in hopes they ſhall have time to repent hereafter: for what is the meaning of this, but that they'll continue in the practice of thoſe things which hereafter they'll be aſham'd of; and, if ever they heartily repent, will wiſh ten thouſand times they had never done? Can any thing be more abſurd than for a Man to continue in Sin, in hopes to repent upon a Death-Bed; *i.e.* in hopes to have Trouble, and Sorrow, and Anguiſh, beyond all Expreſſion and Thought? Would any Man, who has the uſe of his Reaſon, continually eat of that Food, which he is certain beforehand will make him ſick even to Death, and that he can never expect a moment's Eaſe till his Stomach is diſcharg'd of it? Yet ſuch deſperate Madneſs are all impenitent Sinners guilty of, who delay preparing for the other World, in

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In hopes of doing it on a Death-bed. A Modern repreſents the Folly of it after this manner: "'Tis, ſays he, juſt as if a Man ſhou'd be "content to be ſhipwreck'd, in hopes that "he ſhall afterwards eſcape by a Plank, and "get ſafe to Shore."

Again, Conſider that a time of Sickneſs and Old Age is the moſt inconvenient which can be, to enter on any important Work: The Infirmities which commonly attend aged Perſons, make 'em uneaſy to themſelves, and unſerviceable to others. What can ſuch do when the Strength of their Bodies is enfeebled, and the Faculties of their Minds impair'd, ſo that the Graſhopper is a Burden, and Deſire ſhall fail? I ſay, what can ſuch do, when their Apprehenſions are ſlow, their Judgments weak, their Affections cold, and every thing in Body and Mind under the greateſt Diſorder?

Moreover, let it be conſider'd, that the longer Men delay preparing for Death, and go on in Sin, the more difficult it will be for 'em to return to God. The Prophet compares the Change of a cuſtomary Sinner, to the waſhing of a Blackmoor white: *Can the* Ethiopian *change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots? then may ye alſo do Good, that are accuſtomed to do Evil.*

Again, If Men have any reaſon to repent of their Sins, they have reaſon to do it immediately. If thou art convinc'd of the Evil of Sin, and therefore would forſake it, 'tis much more reaſonable thou ſhouldſt do it now, than defer it to an uncertain Hereafter: for the greater Evil Sin is, the ſooner we leave it, the better. Art thou convinc'd of the dangerous Conſequences which will attend Sin,

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Sin, that it will expoſe thee to the Wrath of God, and to endleſs and inexpreſſible Miſeries? Why, if there is ſuch hazard in Sin, then to break off our Sins immediately, is the ſafeſt Courſe in the World: for the longer a Man goes on in Sin, the greater Danger he puts himſelf in, and the greater Puniſhment he expoſes himſelf to. Haſt thou not run far enough in Debt? Wouldſt thou dare to increaſe the Sum of thy Guilt, and treaſure up more Wrath againſt the Day of Wrath, and the fearful Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God? Doſt thou promiſe to prepare for Death hereafter? Fool that thou art, thou art not ſure of any time but the preſent. Moreover, ſhould your Circumſtances in your laſt Sickneſs be as favourable as you could deſire; ſhould you have ſome time allow'd you, and the uſe of your Reaſon too, you are not ſure that you ſhall have a Heart to repent. Repentance and Faith are the Gift of God; and 'tis evident from Scripture and Experience, that poor Sinners can no more prepare themſelves for the other World without God's ſpecial Grace, than they can ſubſiſt in this, without the common Concurrence of his mighty Power.

Again; Conſider how ungrateful and diſingenuous 'tis for Men to devote the firſt and beſt part of their time to the Service of Sin, and reſerve only the Dregs of Life for the Service of God. Can you imagine that ſuch an Offering will be pleaſing to the Almighty, when there is no Prince on Earth but would abhor it?

Once more, conſider with what Horrour you'll be ſeiz'd, if you ſhould be ſummon'd to the Grave, and ſurpriz'd by Death with-

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out any Preparation at all: How will you bear the Terrors of a wounded Spirit, when you are not capable of ſupporting your ſelves under the Pains of a languiſhing Body? What will you do? Whither will you fly? What can you ſay, when the Heavens are dark over your Heads, and Hell blazes under your Feet? Therefore as you know you ſhall certainly die, earneſtly beg of God the Aſſiſtance of his Holy Spirit, that you may be *always Ready*: then Death in any Dreſs will be no Terror to you; but you will rather be *glad to find the Grave*, becauſe Death will be for your infinite Advantage: as we have reaſon to believe it was to that excellent Miniſter of the Goſpel, whoſe Deceaſe has occaſion'd this Diſcourſe.

He was juſtly eſteem'd by all Men of Probity and good Senſe, who had the advantage of his Acquaintance: For if one conſider the Reverend Mr. *EWER* in any Relation while living, he was very deſirable.

He has diſtinguiſh'd himſelf for ſeveral Years as an exemplary Chriſtian, whoſe Piety towards God, and Affability towards Men, have recommended him to the Eſteem and Approbation of all; *Being an Example to the Believers in Word, in Converſation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity.* He was a *Nathanael*, an *Iſraelite* indeed, one who cou'd not ſtoop to the little Arts and Diſguiſes by which ſome People make their way in the World.

He had a prudent and regular Zeal for the Glory of God, and the Salvation of Souls. He ever expreſs'd a juſt Indignation againſt Sin,

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Sin, and preſs'd after the higheſt degrees of Holineſs. He kept clear from the Extremes of Superſtition and Enthuſiaſm, believing that ſubſtantial Religion did conſiſt in a Conformity to the Moral Perfections of the Godhead. His Moderation was remarkable, and extenſive: He follow'd the things which made for Peace, and diffus'd the grateful Odours of Charity wherever he came. He was patient and ſubmiſſive under the various Trials and Afflictions, to which he was expos'd thro the Courſe of his Life.

And if we conſider him in his publick Character, as a Divine, he was well qualify'd with uſeful Learning and Miniſterial Gifts: A Man *Vigilant, Sober, and of Good Behaviour; given to Hoſpitality, apt to Teach; not given to Wine, no Striker, not greedy of filthy Lucre, but Patient; not a Brawler, not Covetous; One that rul'd well his own Houſe, having his Children in ſubjection with all Gravity.* And as this Miniſter of Chriſt had a peculiar aptneſs to Teach, ſo he was unweary'd in his Maſter's Work; having the Glory of God, and the Intereſt of Souls conſtantly at Heart. The Zeal of God's Houſe had eaten him up; he was continually ſeeking of you, and not yours: *He coveted no Man's Gold or Silver*; he was the fartheſt in the World from a little mercenary Spirit: 'Twas not the Proſpect of outward Gain, but the Love of Souls, that engag'd him in the Miniſterial Work. He did forego that which he might have demanded, I mean a Maintenance for himſelf and Family: For no Man is oblig'd to go a Warfare upon his own Charge; and the Apoſtle ſays, That *Chriſt hath ordain'd that he that preaches the Goſpel*

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ſhould live of it. Yet you are Witneſſes for your deceas'd Paſtor, that he always generouſly gave you his Labours; and yet that did not cauſe him to take the leſs pains in the promoting of your Salvation. But he ſtudied diligently to ſhew himſelf approv'd, a Workman who needed not to be aſham'd, rightly dividing the Word of Truth; and conſtantly in the Courſe of his Miniſtry (as I am inform'd by thoſe who attended it) he did inſiſt upon the great and ſubſtantial Truths contain'd in the Chriſtian Revelation.

If the Sermons of your deceas'd Paſtor had not all the Embelliſhments of Language which ſome boaſt of, they had this peculiar Advantage, to be full of ſolid Divinity; which, I think, is a much better Character for a Pulpit-Diſcourſe, than to ſay, that 'tis full of pompous Eloquence and Flights of Wit. The Praiſe of this uſeful Miniſter is in all the Churches, where the knowledg of him has reach'd. Here indeed he liv'd, here he conſtantly preach'd; and, I believe, you'll all own, that his Life was an excellent Sermon: for in that you might ſee the Practicableneſs and Uſefulneſs of Relative Duties. In him you might behold the manly Tenderneſs of a loving Husband, the melting Compaſſions of a kind Father, the generous Freedom of a true Friend, and the admirable Qualifications of a faithful Paſtor. How did he exhort and reprove, and rebuke with all Long-Suffering and Doctrine; meekly inſtructing thoſe who oppos'd themſelves! Did he not warn every Man, Night and Day, beſeeching them with Tears?

Thus

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Thus did he fulfil his Miniſtry, having obtain'd Mercy of the Lord to be faithful; always deſiring, that Chriſt might be magnify'd in his Body, whether in Life or Death. For he accounted not his Life dear to himſelf, ſo that he might finiſh his Courſe with Joy, and the Miniſtry which he had receiv'd of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to teſtify the Goſpel of the Grace of God.

As to his particular Behaviour during his laſt Sickneſs, I am told by thoſe who were nigh him, that he did not paſs the time of his Illneſs without ſome violent Aſſaults from Satan: but it pleas'd the Lord to afford him ſpeedy Relief, and to make him more than a Conqueror, when he conſider'd his Intereſt in the everlaſting Covenant, which is order'd in all things, and ſure. He had not only good Hope thro Grace: but before he left this World, he expreſs'd his Satisfaction and Joy, *That all his Sins were pardon'd, and that that God whom he had ſerv'd in the Goſpel, would never leave him nor forſake him.*

His Indiſpoſition was but ſhort; he was well and dead within the Compaſs of ſeven Days. He did not apprehend that he ſhould die of his Illneſs, till about two days before his Death. His Pain was ſo great, that he car'd to diſcourſe but little; and when he drew near his end, he was ſometimes delirious. Yet when he had the leaſt Interval, he expreſs'd a very deep Concern for the Church under his Care, which he had fed and govern'd agreeably to the Divine Word. But he has done ſowing in the Church Militant, and is gone to reap the Fruits of his Labours in the Church Triumphant. He is enter'd into that

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Reſt which remains for the People of God: He is fallen aſleep in Jeſus, having fought the good Fight, and finiſh'd his Courſe, and kept the Faith. Death has clos'd his Eyes, and ſeal'd up his Lips till the firſt Reſurrection.

You are to have no more Admonitions nor Exhortations from him. May you that once rejoic'd in his Light, and were comforted and edify'd under his Miniſtry, remember the wholeſom Truths he taught, and the excellent Duties he recommended to your Practice; that he may not be a ſwift Witneſs againſt you in the Day of God.

I know I cannot ſpeak this, without occaſioning a great Emotion in your Mind; bu let not your Paſſions get the ſtart of your Reaſon, and ſo hinder your receiving the Inſtructions which this Providence may furniſh you withal.

To you who were his ſpecial Care and Charge, to whom his Memory will be ever precious; Continue in the Belief of thoſe Doctrines, and in the Practice of thoſe Duties you have been taught by him from the Word of God. Diſappoint Satan or any Agents of his, who may have Deſigns to divide and ſcatter you. *Labour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bonds of Peace: And put on as the Elect of God, Holy and Beloved, Bowels of Mercy, Kindneſs, Humbleneſs of Mind, Long-ſuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another.* And tho you have loſt him who watch'd over you in the Lord, remember that the great Shepherd of the Sheep, and Biſhop of your Souls, lives for ever; and if you are humble, and charitable, patient, and ſubmiſſive, and wait on God, he will yet *ſatisfy his Poor with Bread,*

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Bread, and give you a Paſtor after his own Heart, who ſhall feed you with Knowledg and Underſtanding.

To you his mournful Relict; Conſider 'tis the Hand of that God, who is ſo wiſe, that he cannot do any thing againſt the real Intereſt of thoſe who love him. Indeed he has ſuddenly remov'd from you, him whom you hop'd to have enjoy'd many Years: But your God is the ſame to day, yeſterday, and for ever; and has promis'd to be the Judg of the Widow, and that he will never leave nor forſake thoſe who put their truſt in him.

To you the tender Off-ſpring of the Deceas'd; I charge you, before God and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that you ſerve your Father's God: remember what ſeaſonable Advice he gave you, and with what Importunity and Fervour he us'd to pray, that your Souls may be ſav'd in the Great Day of our Lord. Let your Father's Vertues live in your Lives, and do you follow him as he follow'd Chriſt; then ſhall you meet him again with Comfort, at the Right-hand of the Redeemer, when he ſhall come the ſecond time without Sin, to Salvation.

Once more, to all you who were the conſtant Auditors of that excellent Miniſter, whoſe Remains we are about to commit to the Duſt: Let me intreat you to lay this Providence to Heart. The Wiſe-Man ſays, *'Tis better to go to the Houſe of Mourning, than to go to the Houſe of Feaſting; for that is the end of all Men, and the Living will lay it to his Heart.* Probably here are many of you who have ſat under the Reverend Mr. *Ewer*'s Miniſtry for ſeveral Years, and yet continue in a State of Nature. God grant, that ſince you cannot date your Converſion from any of his

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Sermons, you may from this awful Providence, which publiſhes the Vanity of human Life, and calls aloud upon Sinners to make an early Preparation for the inviſible World. Tho you have a great while reſiſted the Importunities of the Son of God, and would not be prevail'd upon by the Rhetorick of his Tears and Blood; I beſeech you by the Mercies of God, and by the melting Compaſſions of the meek Jeſus, that you immediately caſt down the Weapons of your Rebellion, and ſubmit to the Righteouſneſs and Scepter of the Son of God. Then ſhall you have Hope in Death, and eternal Happineſs after it; for an abundant Entrance ſhall be adminiſter'd to all ſuch, into the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. *For bleſſed are the Dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their Labours; and their Works do follow them.*

Rev. 14. 13.

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The extravagant Mirth of Youth expos'd, from the Consideration of a Judgment to come.

A

Funeral Sermon

Occasion'd by the

DEATH

OF

Mr. *George Stennett*,

PREACH'D

The 17*th* of *September*, 1709.

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ECCLES. XI. 9.

Rejoice, O young Man, in thy Youth, and let thy Heart chear thee in the Days of thy Youth; and walk in the ways of thy Heart, and in the ſight of thine Eyes: but know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into Judgment.

IN this Book we have a large account of the various Experiments that were made by *Solomon* in his Searches after Happineſs, together with his Refutation of the ſeveral miſtaken Opinions, which he and others had formerly entertain'd about it. The Royal Preacher had a Genius fitted to enterprize great things; He ſeems to have had a ſtrong Paſſion for Philoſophy, and to have thought that the Study of Nature would have rais'd him to a conſiderable Pitch of Happineſs. For, ſays he, *I gave my Heart to ſeek and ſearch out by Wiſdom,* Ecci. 1. 13. *concerning*

concerning all things that are under Heaven. But after his utmoſt Application and Diligence, he
Ver. 14. inſcribes upon them, *All is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit.*

The wiſe Man alſo turn'd his Thoughts to the Study of Politicks, and enter'd deep into the Myſteries of Government: and tho he had a Largeneſs of Soul that render'd him capable of the niceſt Diſquiſitions, and conſtantly furniſh'd him with the nobleſt Views; yet he
Ver. 18. himſelf found, that *in much Wiſdom is much Grief, and he that increaſeth Knowledg, increaſeth Sorrow.*

Now *Solomon* having not ſucceeded in theſe Attempts, was ſo unhappy as to abandon himſelf to Vice, and ranſacks the whole Creation to miniſter to his Senſes: *I ſaid in my Heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with Mirth; therefore enjoy Pleaſure.* He ran a prodigious length in his Senſualities, and ventur'd very far in the chaſe of forbidden
Ver. 17. Pleaſures; *I gave my Heart to know Wiſdom, and to know Madneſs and Folly.* Well, and what Satisfaction do his bold Adventures in Sin produce? Does Enjoyment anſwer the height of Expectation? No, for he preſently adds, *Be-*
Eccl. 2. 1, 2. *hold this alſo is Vanity. I ſaid of Laughter, It is mad; and of Mirth, What doth it?* Yet after all his Diſappointments, his uneaſy Mind puſhes him on to make further Trials, and to carry his Searches after Happineſs, thro every thing that Men either court or admire in this World. He turns his Thoughts to Architecture, and enters on Works of Pomp and Magnificence: *I made me great Works, I builded me Houſes, I planted me Vineyards, I made me Gardens and Orchards, and I planted Trees in them of all kind*

kind of Fruits, &c. And he ſtops not here, but goes on to enlarge his Retinue, and to raiſe the Glory and Grandure of his Court: *I got me Servants and Maidens, and had Servants born in my Houſe: —I gather'd me alſo Silver and Gold, and the peculiar Treaſure of Kings and of the Provinces: I got me Men-ſingers and Women-ſingers, and the Delights of the Sons of Men, as Muſical Inſtruments, and that of all ſorts. So I was great, and increas'd more than all that went before me in* Jeruſalem; *alſo my Wiſdom remain'd with me.* q. d. I yet retain'd my intellectual Accompliſhments, tho I had been ſo raſh and fooliſh as to ſully my Moral Character; for he immediately ſubjoins, *And whatſoever mine Eyes deſir'd, I kept not from them, I withheld not my Heart from any Joy.* Yet after all, when the Wiſe-Man comes ſedately to review what he had done, he pronounces, *That all was Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, and there was no Profit under the Sun.* V. 7, 8, 9. Ver. 10. Ver. 11.

Now *Solomon*, who exceeded all the Sons of Men for Wiſdom as well as Riches, and the Circumſtances of whoſe Reign had given him the greateſt Advantages in the World to examine the Nature of all ſublunary things, does, after the utmoſt Trial, lay down in this Book the beſt Obſervations he had form'd, for the Service and Uſe of all ſucceeding Ages; that others might ſhun the Miſchiefs he had plung'd himſelf into, and no longer weary themſelves, by ſeeking Happineſs where it is not to be found: For the wiſeſt of Men hath aſſur'd us, not only from Experience, but Inſpiration, That Religion is the only Happineſs. *Let us hear the Concluſion of the whole Matter: Fear God, and keep his Commandments; for this is the Whole* Eccl. 12. 13.

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of Man: i. e. herein lies the whole of his Intereſt, as well as the ſum of his Duty. Now to promote this excellent end, the wiſe Man gives many admirable Rules thro every part of this Book, one of which is contain'd in the words of the Text.

Rejoice, O young Man, in thy Youth; and let thy Heart chear thee in the Days of thy Youth; and walk in the Ways of thy Heart, and in the Sight of thine Eyes: but know, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into Judgment.

Theſe words are principally addreſs'd to young People, tho they are not improper to inſtruct thoſe that are advanc'd in years.

Interpreters are not agreed about the Senſe of the former part of this Text: ſome are of Opinion, that when the Wiſe-Man ſays, *Rejoice, O young Man, in thy Youth, and let thy Heart chear thee in the Days of thy Youth*, &c. 'tis a Conceſſion or Allowance which he gives young People to uſe the Divertiſements and Pleaſures of Life, ſo they do but keep within the Bounds of Innocence and Moderation: *q. d.* "Don't "think I am ſo ſtrict as to make it crimi- "nal for you to be chearful and merry in "Converſation: You may uſe the good Crea- "tures that God hath given you; Religion "does not reſtrain you from any Pleaſures that "are manly and rational, it only obliges you "to manage your ſelf after ſuch a manner, as "becomes thoſe that believe they ſhall ſhortly "give an account of all their Talents and Ad- "vantages to the Judg of the Quick and Dead." To this * Interpretation I think 'tis very juſtly excepted, *That walking in the way of one's Heart,*

* Vid. *Mr.* Stennett's *Advice to the Young*, p. 10.

and

and in the ſight of one's Eyes, cannot be eaſily accommodated to a moderate uſe of worldly Enjoyments. Moreover, it cannot be deny'd, but that theſe Phraſes are us'd in the Scripture in a Senſe extremely different; namely, to ſignify a diſſolute and ſinful Courſe of Life, and not a temperate uſe of lawful Pleaſures. Therefore,

Others think, that the Wiſe-Man in theſe Words ſpeaks by way of Irony, and that he derides and expoſes the Abſurdity of thoſe Principles, by which the generality of young People govern themſelves; who imagine, that nothing can render 'em ſo happy as Mirth and Jollity: therefore 'tis as if he had ſaid, "Take "thy fill of Pleaſure, give a looſe to thy Paſ- "ſions, follow the ſwinge of Appetite and "Senſe; but then conſider what will be the "conſequence of ſuch a Courſe of Life, re- "member the Day is haſtening, and will come, "when *every Man ſhall give an account of him- "ſelf to God*; and then thy youthful Crimes "will be ſeverely animadverted upon, for "thou ſhalt exchange thy temporary Pleaſures "for eternal Pains: *Know thou, that for all "theſe things God will bring thee into Judg- "ment.*"

There is yet another Senſe given of theſe words by a very learned Divine *, who obſerves, "That *Solomon* having declar'd his main "Scope and Deſign in the beginning and "concluſion of this Book, brings in ſometimes "the different Senſes which Mankind are apt "to have concerning the Happineſs of Life; "and that is the Reaſon we meet with ſuch

* *Biſhop* Stillingfleet.

"diffe-

" different Expreſſions concerning it. In one " place 'tis ſaid, *There is no better thing under* " *the Sun, than to eat, and drink, and be merry*; " but in another he ſaith, *Sorrow is better than* " *Laughter, and by the Sadneſs of the Counte-* " *nance the Heart is made better.* How can ſuch " Paſſages as theſe be reconcil'd, if we look " on them as expreſſing the Senſe of the ſame " Perſon? But if we allow them to be the " different Notions of two ſorts of Men in " this World, they are eaſy to be underſtood, " tho not to be reconcil'd. And the one ſort " is of thoſe who place all Happineſs in this " Life, without regard to Religion, or Ver- " tue, or another World: and the other, of " thoſe who look on this Life only as a Paſ- " ſage to another; and that all Perſons ought " to behave themſelves here, ſo as conduces " moſt to their Happineſs hereafter."

Now according to theſe different Views, ſuppoſing this Book to be Dramatical, the Advice given to young People in the Text is very different. The Advice of the Senſualiſt, we are ſure, the Wiſe-Man did never deſign to recommend to young People: ſo that whether we underſtand the Words as an Irony, or as the Sentiments of an Epicure, the Deſign of the Royal Preacher is to expoſe the extravagant Mirth of thoſe Sinners, *who walk in the way of their Hearts, and in the ſight of their Eyes*; i. e. who are intirely influenc'd and govern'd by what pleaſes their Sight, or is ſutable to the vicious Inclinations of their ſenſual Minds; forgetting that they muſt ſhortly die, and after that be brought to Judgment. For as the Wiſe-Man admoniſhes in the words immediately preceding the Text, *But if a Man live many Years,*

Years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the Days of Darkneſs, for they ſhall be many: q. d. If that happen, which is not very likely, *viz.* that ſo frail a Creature as Man ſhould arrive to a very great Age; yet 'tis very improbable that all things ſhould run ſmoothly on thro a long Succeſſion of Years, without any interruption; that he ſhould have nothing but occaſion of Joy in every Stage and Period of Life: Yet if any one ſhould be favour'd after this unuſual manner, let him remember his Sun muſt ſet, his long Day of Proſperity will come to an end, and a long Night of Darkneſs ſucceed it. *Let him remember the Days of Darkneſs, for they ſhall be many.*

Rejoice, O young Man, &c. From the words thus explain'd, I have a fair Occaſion to diſcourſe on theſe two Heads:

Firſt, Concerning the Unreaſonableneſs and Abſurdity of the extravagant Mirth of young Sinners, *who walk in the way of their Hearts, and in the ſight of their Eyes.*

Secondly, The excellent Advice that is given to young People, to check and reſtrain 'em in their Mirth and Riot; *i. e.* by recommending to 'em the Conſideration of a Judgment to come. *Know thou that,* &c.

Firſt, We are to diſcourſe concerning the Unreaſonableneſs and Abſurdity of the extravagant Mirth of young Sinners, who walk in the way of their Hearts, and in the ſight of their Eyes.

Young People are naturally addicted to Mirth and Jollity; and partly by the ſtrength of In-

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clination, and the allurements of Company, back'd with the ſollicitations of the Devil, they are very apt to be exceſſively tranſported with the love of Pleaſure, and to place their Happineſs in the Guſts and Reliſhes of the Animal Nature.

Now that Mirth, which is occaſion'd by ſuch Methods as are recited in our Text, viz. *by walking in the way of one's Heart, and in the ſight of one's Eyes*, is unreaſonable and abſurd: and however People at preſent may pleaſe themſelves with the tranſient Glories of this World, and forbidden Pleaſures of Sin, and imagine they are very happy; the near approaches of Death, and the conſideration of a Judgment after it, would help Men to form truer Notions both of Perſons and Things, and ſhow them the Unreaſonableneſs and Extravagancy of their ſenſual Joy and Triumph.

Suffer me therefore a little to expoſe the Folly of ſuch who govern themſelves by the vicious Inclinations of their Minds, and the deceitful Appearances of things; who are ſo vain as to place their Happineſs in the Gratification of their Senſes, and in the Enjoyment of what this World can afford; when the Pleaſures they ſo much admire do but debaſe the Soul, and delude the poor Sinner with falſe Appearances of Happineſs.

That is not a real Happineſs, which impenitent Sinners enjoy, becauſe it will not endure Examination. If we enquire what is the true Cauſe of a Sinner's Mirth, we ſhall find it has no ſolid Foundation, and that ſuch a one pleaſes himſelf only with Dreams of Happineſs. For the Man that enjoys true Happineſs, enjoys that which will bear

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the ſtricteſt trial. The more good Men think of God, and the Perfections of his Nature, the more they are convinc'd that he is every way fit to ſupport the weight and ſtreſs of their Souls; and that to know, love, and enjoy him, is the Happineſs of reaſonable Creatures. But the farther wicked Men ſearch into the grounds of their Happineſs, the more they diſcover the Badneſs of the Foundation upon which it was built. So that indeed you ordinarily find that vicious Men are unwilling to turn their Eyes inward, and impartially to examine their State: for ſuch People dread to be alone, and therefore chuſe either to live in a hurry of Buſineſs, or amidſt a multitude of Diverſions, that they may not be put upon examining the Grounds upon which their imaginary Happineſs is built. Now for People to rejoice in ſenſual Gratifications, and to place their Happineſs in 'em, when they will not bear the Scrutiny of Reaſon, is the moſt abſurd thing in the World.

Again, The capacious Deſires of an immortal Spirit can never be fully ſatisfy'd with terrene Enjoyments. A Man cannot ſatisfy his Senſes with thoſe material Objects that ſtrike 'em moſt agreeably, much leſs the large Deſires of his Mind. 'Tis as eaſy to paint a Sound to pleaſe the Ear, or to appeaſe vehement Thirſt with the Image of a Fountain, as to render our Souls happy by the ſenſual Delights of this World. The Eye is not ſatisfy'd with ſeeing, nor the Ear with hearing. Now if all the Glitter and Pomp of this lower World cannot ſatisfy our Eyes, nor the moſt charming Muſick and agreeable Sounds our Ears, how is it likely that any of theſe things

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alone ſhould render a Soul happy, that is capable of higher Enjoyments, and was made for Rational and Divine Pleaſures?

Men will be always fluctuating, till they have found an Object which is adequate to the Deſires of their Minds; for tho our Minds are finite, yet we have powerful Affections, and ſtrong and vehement Deſires; which nothing can ſatisfy, but that God who poſſeſſes all imaginable Perfections: and therefore the Pſalmiſt, when he had made the ſtricteſt inquiry after Happineſs, concludes that God was the Supreme Good, and conſequently the only Happineſs, and the proper Reſt and Center of his Soul: *Whom*, ſays he, *have I in Heaven but Thee? and there is none upon Earth that I deſire beſides Thee!*

One reaſon why no ſenſual Pleaſures can render us happy, is, becauſe we are always deſiring more than we enjoy; tho after we have attain'd what we moſt importunately deſir'd, we find the Obſervation of the Wiſe-Man true, *That all that cometh is Vanity*, as well as all that is paſt. Which alſo confirms the Truth of the following Remark, which I have ſomewhere met with, *viz.* That all ſenſual Pleaſures are founded upon Ignorance, and that a wiſe Man can find no Paradiſe here, tho the Fool imagines he can.

Again, The Enjoyments of this preſent World that excite the extravagant Mirth of Sinners, are uncertain; they have no Security that they ſhall enjoy them a moment to come. It has been frequently obſerv'd, even by the Pagan Philoſophers, that thoſe Objects that are enjoy'd but a little time, and are ſubject to Corruption, cannot merit the Deſire,

nor

nor are they worthy the Eſteem of Immortal Spirits.

Now all earthly Enjoyments periſh in the uſing; they inſenſibly and ſuddenly ſlide from us: and if it were not ſo, we cannot continue here long to poſſeſs 'em. *For what is our Life! 'tis even a Vapour which appeareth for a little time, and then vaniſheth away.* And the Apoſtle tells us, that the Pleaſures of Sin are but for a ſeaſon. And the Wiſe-Man calls the Things of this World, Things that are not: *Why wilt thou ſet thine Eyes upon that which is not? For Riches certainly make to themſelves Wings, they flee away as an Eagle towards Heaven.* Thoſe that have had the higheſt Poſts of Honour, have ſuddenly ſlid into Diſgrace; for ſuch ſtand in ſlippery Places. What Diſeaſes has the Intemperance of ſome brought upon 'em? So that the little time they have enjoy'd their ſenſual Pleaſures, has convinc'd 'em, that their Happineſs was but imaginary and very incompleat. *Who hath Woe? Who hath Sorrow? Who hath Contentions? Who hath Babbling? Who hath Wounds without Cauſe? Who hath Redneſs of Eyes? they that tarry long at the Wine, they that go to ſeek mixt Wine.* Prov. 23. 29, 30.

'Tis an excellent Obſervation of a modern Divine, who, ſpeaking of Intemperance, ſays, "It is very viſible, that all ſenſual Exceſs is "naturally attended with a double Inconve- "nience: as it goes beyond the Limits of "Nature, it begets bodily Pains and Diſeaſes; "as it tranſgreſſes the Rules of Reaſon and Re- "ligion, it breeds Diſquiet and Remorſe in the "Mind: and theſe are beyond compariſon, the "two greateſt Evils in this World; a diſeaſed "Body, and a diſcontented Mind."

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How foolish then is it for Men to place their Happiness in the Pleasures of Sin, that are constantly mix'd with some present Trouble, and without Repentance will be certainly follow'd with exquisite and eternal Misery?

That can't be a compleat Happiness, which depends upon ten thousand Uncertainties; yet this is the Condition of all Sinners, who place their Happiness in the things of this Life. Let a wicked Man have ever such vast Possessions, he has no Security that he shall enjoy 'em one Minute; and when his Riches, and Honours, and Pleasures are gone from *him*, all his Happiness is departed, and he is a miserable forlorn undone Man. Therefore for Young or Old to spend their time in extravagant Mirth, *walking in the way of their Hearts, and the sight of their Eyes*, is the most unreasonable thing in the World; because those Pleasures they pursue (tho they were much greater than they are) they have no security of enjoying long. Now every poor Sinner has a Soul that shall out-last this World, and all the Enjoyments of it; so that if he could please his Senses, and gratify his Lusts, and have all that his Heart desir'd as long as he liv'd, yet at Death he would be undone; for then he and his Happiness must part, and part for ever too: whereas those that are truly Religious, and have chosen the better part, have chosen such a part as shall never be taken from them.

Again, The Absurdity of these Sensualists will further appear, if we consider, that their extravagant Mirth has a tendency to make 'em insensible and stupid. When Men abuse the Blessings of Heaven to Vanity and Pride, Idleness

neſs and Luxury, they lay aſide that Reverence they owe to the Divine Majeſty; for God is not in all their Thoughts: and inſtead of trembling at God's Judgments, they harden their Hearts from his Fear. With what Inſolence did *Nebuchadnezzar* ſpeak, when under the Tranſports of an exceſſive Joy, upon his obſerving his magnificent Buildings! *Is not this great* Babylon *that I have built for the Houſe of the Kingdom, by the Might of my Power, and for the Honour of my Majeſty?* Again, *David* is alſo a remarkable, but ſad Inſtance, how ſenſual Pleaſures ſtupify the Mind; for tho he muſt needs have ſinn'd againſt the Light of his Conſcience in the matter of *Uriah*, yet he ſeems for ſeveral Months, to be inſenſible of his Folly: nay, tho he condemn'd the Action in a ſecond Perſon, which he himſelf had been guilty of, yet his Mind was ſo ſtupid that he was not touch'd with a true ſenſe of his Sin, till *Nathan* had the Courage to charge his Guilt home, and to tell him in expreſs words, *Thou art the Man.* Carnal Pleaſures enervate the Vigour of our Spirits, cloud the Mind, and corrupt the Affections, and make Men daring and bold in Sin. When People run on ſmoothly in Vice, and meet with very little interruption, they are ſoon loſt to all ſenſe of Religion; for as the Pſalmiſt has obſerv'd of ſuch, *Becauſe they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.* Pſal. 55. 19.

Again, The Folly of theſe Senſualiſts will further appear, if we conſider them in a State of Nature, under the Curſe of the Law, under the Wrath of God, and condemn'd already; how ill-ſuted is an extravagant Mirth to the Circumſtances of ſuch Perſons?

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Should we not think it a very unreaſonable, a very unbecoming thing, to ſee a poor condemn'd Malefactor giving himſelf up to all kinds of Diverſion, when he is hourly expecting the Officers of Juſtice to lead him to the place of Execution? But how much more unſeemly and unreaſonable is it, for a poor Sinner to continue his extravagant Mirth and mad Frolicks, when he knows not but the next Moment he ſhall have his Portion in that Lake that burns with Fire and Brimſtone?

Again, He that places his Happineſs in ſenſual Enjoyments, acts the moſt unreaſonable part, as will appear, by comparing the ſordid Pleaſures of Sin with the noble and rational Pleaſures of Religion: I mean, not only the Pleaſures of Communion with God in this World, but alſo the more refin'd Delights of the other. *The ways of Wiſdom*, now, *are ways of Pleaſantneſs, and all her Paths are Peace*; and good Men have that Joy which no Stranger can intermeddle with: but Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither has it ever enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive what God has laid up, what he has reſerv'd and prepar'd in the other World for them that love him. But alas! all ſenſual Enjoyments are empty and unſatisfying, mix'd and fleeting; they effeminate and debaſe our Minds, occaſion Anxiety and Trouble here: but that which is infinitely worſe, they expoſe Perſons hereafter to Miſeries that ſhall be endleſs and eternal.

The Pain of a reſtleſs Deſire does frequently over-ballance the Pleaſures of Enjoyment. The firſt Taſte indeed a Man has of forbidden Delights, is uſually grateful, tho it never anſwers the height of Expectation: But after the ſame Plea-

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Pleaſures have been frequently repeated, they grow flat; and a few years trial of the Vanity of the World, makes a Man loath what he once fondly admir'd. All Exceſs in ſenſual Pleaſures is an Enemy to Nature: for if our Pleaſures are too intenſe, they certainly incommode us, becauſe we don't ſo properly enjoy as ſuffer them. So that, in ſhort, all the ſenſual Enjoyments of this Life, which Men falſly call Pleaſure and Happineſs, are rather an eager and importunate Deſire of Happineſs, than Happineſs it ſelf: for no ſooner have we obtain'd our Wiſhes, but our Pleaſures die; and then are we as reſtleſs in the purſuit of Happineſs as we were before, in vain attempting to perpetuate our Pleaſures in an endleſs Circle of Variety; tho this Scene of Vanity, with which the World preſents us, has cheated and deceiv'd us times without number.

Whereas the Pleaſures of the future State are of a rational and ſublime nature, ſuch as an eternal Enjoyment will not leſſen, but improve; they will never tire, tho they may help to enlarge the Faculties of our Minds: for 'tis no leſs than an infinite Good, which the Righteous ſhall enjoy in the Life to come. Now the longer we enjoy ſo great a Good, the more we ſhall value it; and in proportion to our Knowledg will be our Love, Joy, and Satisfaction, which ſhall continue thro the Ages of Eternity. The Happineſs of Heaven may, in ſome ſenſe, be ſaid every minute to comprehend in it the Pleaſures of an Eternity; becauſe we ſhall always have an Eternity of Pleaſures before us. Now what compariſon is there betwixt the tranſient Pleaſures of Sin, and the eternal Delights of Heaven? The

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former are fleeting, but the latter never end; they are always improving, always freſh, ſuch as ſhall never be interrupted, nor fall under any abatement or decay. Happineſs not only comprehends a freedom from Diſeaſes and Death, but alſo from all Anxiety and Trouble of Mind. And this is to be obtain'd by Religion, which frees a Man from the greateſt Evils, and raiſes him to the Enjoyment of the higheſt and chiefeſt Good. The Favour of God is infinitely to be prefer'd to the Friendſhip of the World. Who would not then much rather chuſe the former, tho it ſhould be attended with preſent Sufferings, than the latter, tho it might be enjoy'd with ſome tranſient Pleaſures, but infallibly ſucceeded with eternal Torments?

But finally, The Reproaches that all Senſualiſts meet with from Conſcience now, and the dreadful Expectation of a Judgment hereafter, give them very great Uneaſineſs within, tho they endeavour, before others, to appear with a great deal of Gayity and Mirth. A proſperous Sinner may make a ſhift for a little while to ſhake off his Fears, and purſue his carnal Delights; but if any grievous Calamity be in view, his Fears return with greater force: and tho he hurries from place to place, and uſes all the little Arts of Diverſion, he will be reſtleſs, and feel Pain and Uneaſineſs within. *The Wicked are like the troubled Sea when it cannot reſt, whoſe Waters caſt up Mire and Dirt. There is no Peace, ſaith my God, to the Wicked.* Indeed ſuch may diſſemble their Condition, and make an appearance of Satisfaction; but God, that is acquainted with the Secrets of all Hearts, knows what Horror rages in their Breaſt.

Ask a young Debauchee (if his Conſcience is

is not ſear'd) what Reliſh remains upon his Mind of the Pleaſures of the laſt Night, now the agreeable Taſte of the Wine is gone? Let his ſick Stomach, and his aching Head, and his guilty Conſcience relate the Pleaſures of the laſt drunken Frolick. The poor Wretch, it may be, will ſmile in the Morning, when he ſees his Companions in Sin; becauſe he would not ſeem to be ſo far tainted with what they call Superſtition, and ſo troubled with Religion, as to truckle to Conſcience. But what does the unhappy Man feel within! eſpecially when he comes to lie upon a ſick Bed, and has a near view of Death and Hell, and apprehends he is juſt ready to be ſeiz'd by the one, and ſink into the other. Indeed ſome People ſtupify Conſcience very early; yet thoſe very Perſons, when they come within the view of Eternity, are often awaken'd; and then they are ready to cry out after this dreadful manner: "Lord, "what ſhall I do, whither ſhall I go, to whom "ſhall I fly! What muſt I, what may I, what "can I do! I am ſo ſick, that I deſpair of "Life; I am ſo guilty, that I am terribly a-"fraid of Death: I have been ſo wicked, that "I cannot pray; and if I could, I am afraid "that God will never have Mercy on me: for "I have defy'd his Power, disbeliev'd his "Truth, burleſqu'd his Patience, and con-"ſtantly abus'd his Goodneſs. Good God! "what have I done! Lord, what have I not "done, that is vile and ingrateful to Heaven! "Now I muſt feel what I would not believe, "and my ſhort merry Life muſt have a ſorrow-"ful Concluſion. I am now leaving this "World; and all I can expect, is to be con-"demn'd for ever in the next, for ever to be

"con-

" condemn'd, for ever! And yet that is not " all; for if there be any ſharper Torments, " any fiercer Damnation aſſign'd to ſome than " others, that ſhall be my Portion: ſince I " ſinn'd againſt the cleareſt Light, the ſtrongeſt " Convictions of Conſcience, and the higheſt " Expreſſions of the Divine Love."

Tell me then, thou young and careleſs Sinner, whether thy ſinful Mirth is not Madneſs, when it is likely to iſſue in weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of Teeth. *Wo unto you that laugh now, ye ſhall mourn and weep. For know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into Judgment.*

Secondly, Here is the excellent Advice which is given by the Wiſe-Man, to reſtrain young People in their vain Purſuits: He recommends to them the ſerious Conſideration of a Judgment to come. *Know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into Judgment.*

The Royal Preacher knew very well, that young People were apt to be daring and bold, and, againſt the Remonſtrance of Reaſon and Conſcience, to ruſh into Sin; that they ſeldom enter into their own Breaſts, to acquaint themſelves with the Plague of their own Hearts; and that for want of Conſideration and Reflection, Experience and a ſolid Judgment, they would be backward to entertain any grave Advice, and be impatient of all Reſtraints. For the extravagant Mirth, in which they who are in the Bloom of Youth do often indulge themſelves, does uſually put Reaſon beſides its guard; and then no wonder if they are drawn into Sin by every tempting Object. Now, I ſay, the Wiſe-Man being very ſenſible of

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of the danger young People were in, thought nothing more proper for their Conſideration, than the Doctrine of a future Judgment. *Know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into Judgment.* This is an Article of Faith of the laſt Importance, and has ſomething in it very ſolemn and aweful, and commands our ſerious and reverent Attention: And certainly if ever we are ſerious, it's reaſonable we ſhould be ſo, when we are hearing a Diſcourſe upon the laſt and general Judgment, that ſhall determine the everlaſting State of all Mankind. Now concerning the future Judgment, there are ſeveral things that will afford us many profitable Reflections: As,

1. The Certainty of it.
2. The Extent of it.
3. The Impartiality with which it ſhall be adminiſter'd.
4. The immediate Conſequences thereof, both with regard to the Righteous and the Wicked. Which four things, if duly weigh'd, will give an effectual check to the Jollity and extravagant Mirth of young People.

1. Let us ſeriouſly conſider the Certainty of a future Judgment, what Reaſons there are to induce us to believe there will be a Day wherein God will judg the World; for unleſs Men are fully perſuaded of this, 'tis not likely to make any great Impreſſion on their Conſciences, or to have any conſiderable influence on the Reformation of their Lives. Indeed if Men could look into Heaven or Hell, while they are in this World, and obſerve the great difference there in the Condition and Circumſtances of good and bad Spirits departed; if in this preſent State Men could diſcern what a vaſt Gulph

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is fix'd between the Souls that are in Priſon, and the Spirits that are in Paradiſe, Men would not need to have the Certainty of a future Judgment prov'd to 'em by a chain of Arguments; for then the matter would be evident to Senſe. But alas! the future State is inviſible to us at preſent; and it muſt be Reaſon or Revelation, or both, that can convince Men they ſhall hereafter give an account of themſelves to God.

I ſhall therefore touch on a few Arguments, from which we may infer the Certainty of a future Judgment: And in all theſe Arguments I muſt take it for granted, that you believe the Being of a God, who poſſeſſes all imaginable Perfections.

Now we may reaſonably conclude, that there will be a future Judgment, if we conſider our relation to God, as Creatures to a Creator. God being our Creator, has an abſolute Right to govern us: And if we are under the Government of the Supreme Majeſty, as we are certain he will govern us agreeably to the Perfections of his own Nature; ſo we are ſure that the Laws he'll govern us by, ſhall be ſuted to the Faculties and Powers of our Natures. Since then God has endow'd us with Reaſon to judg of Right and Wrong, and has given us liberty of Choice, and ſubjected us to a Law as the Rule of our Duty; I think 'tis evident, that we are accountable for our Actions: and if accountable, it may reaſonably be expected, that he that made and governs us, will call us to an Account. I allow, if Men were under no Law, they could be guilty of no Tranſgreſſions, and conſequently would be exempted from giving any account of their Actions to the

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the Supreme Being. But ſince 'tis granted, that Almighty God does govern the World after the beſt manner, ſutable to the Hopes and Fears of rational Creatures, which cannot be without the Aſſurance of Rewards and Puniſhments, agreeable to Mens Actions; 'tis highly reaſonable to conclude, that Men, who have Rational Powers, and are under a Law, who have the liberty of Choice, and are dependent on Him that made them, will moſt certainly be judg'd by him. If it be thought reaſonable amongſt Men, that all Inferiors ſhould be accountable to thoſe that are their Superiors, on whom they depend; there is a much ſtronger Reaſon for us to believe, that all Mankind ſhall give an account to the God that made them, and does govern them.

Again, if there is a natural and abſolute difference betwixt Good and Evil, antecedent to all poſitive Laws, whether Human or Divine; then 'tis reaſonable to conclude, that the righteous Sovereign of the World will reward Vertue and puniſh Vice: unleſs we can ſuppoſe, that the Supreme Majeſty will have leſs regard to his own Laws, than Men have to theirs. Indeed Mr. *Hobbs*, and ſome of his Admirers, have affirm'd, that Vertue and Vice are arbitrary things; but certainly if Holineſs, Juſtice, and Goodneſs, are eſſential and neceſſary Perfections of the Divine Nature, then there muſt be a natural and eternal difference between Good and Evil. Some things in their own nature are intrinſecally good, others in their own nature are abſolutely evil; there is a real and eſſential difference betwixt adoring and blaſpheming the God that made us, betwixt doing Juſtice to our Neighbour, and by Perfidiouſneſs

diouſneſs or Perjury depriving him of his Right: Theſe things are ſo clear, that they carry their own Evidence with them. And if any Perſons, thro a paſſionate regard to their Luſts, or the ill reaſoning of Atheiſtical Men, ſhould be ſo unhappy as to imagine that all Actions, in their own nature, are indifferent; that Vertue and Vice are arbitrary, and depend on the Pleaſure and Caprice of Princes, and the eſtabliſh'd Cuſtom and Uſage of Nations; I would intreat ſuch at preſent only to put theſe two things to themſelves: one is, Whether they are not better pleas'd with themſelves, when they do Acts of Juſtice and Charity, than when they are guilty of Rapine and Violence?

Again, I would ask the Man that is for confounding the natural, neceſſary, and eternal Diſtinctions of Good and Evil, whether he would be willing that all who live in the ſame Kingdom with him ſhould believe this? Whether he would perſuade his Wife, and Children, and Servants, to entertain ſuch Principles as theſe, *viz.* That Adultery, Rapine and Murder, are as eligible as Chaſtity, Honeſty, and Charity? Now if a Man would not have all People believe this, it gives one a very ſhreud Suſpicion, that he does not believe it himſelf: and had not ſome Men publiſh'd theſe dangerous Principles, one would have thought it impoſſible for reaſonable Creatures to entertain an Opinion ſo contrary to the Ends of Government, ſo deſtructive to human Society, and ſo diſhonourable both to the natural and moral Perfections of the Deity.

To cloſe this Head: If the Diſtinction betwixt Vertue and Vice is juſtly founded, then that

that God, who neceſſarily loves Holineſs and hates Sin, will call Men to an account for their Actions, ſo as to reward the Good, and puniſh the Bad.

Again, the Fears that poſſeſs the Minds of Men, after the commiſſion of any groſs Sins againſt the Law and Light of Nature, tho ever ſo ſecret, argue the certainty of a Judgment to come. Every Man has a Faculty or Power in his Mind that we call Conſcience, which is the Judg of our moral Actions, and does acquit or condemn us according as our Actions are either good or bad, and ſo afford us either ſecret Pleaſure or inward Remorſe. I dare appeal to the moſt profligate and vicious Perſons, whether there are not ſome ſort of Actions which have that Turpitude and Baſeneſs in them, tho they fall not under the cognizance of any human Tribunal, as to cauſe a ſecret Confuſion, and an amazing Horror in their Minds. Now whence ſhould theſe Fears ſpring, if there is no real difference betwixt Good and Evil, nor no Judgment to come? To this the Profane and Atheiſtical return, That theſe Fears are occaſion'd by a ſuperſtitious Education. But that this is not a rational Account of this matter, will appear, if we conſider how extenſive theſe Fears are; they affect all Mankind, no Man can intirely ſhake them off: Such as are rais'd to the higheſt Dignity, and have made a conſiderable Progreſs in Infidelity and Atheiſm, cannot wholly chaſe away their guilty Fears. For thoſe very Perſons, who have pretended, by their Wit and Reaſon, to diſabuſe unthinking Men; by repreſenting that the Doctrine of a future Judgment at beſt is but a State-Engine, to keep People in awe;

I say, these very Men, when they have drawn near the brink of Eternity, have been quite dispirited *, and have been seiz'd with ten thousand guilty Fears, lest Hell should prove hotter than a painted Flame, and a future Judgment more terrible than an imaginary Assize. And I very much question, whether ever any Sinner in the World was perfectly freed from the Fears of the last Tribunal; and if there could be a few such Instances produc'd, it would not lessen the force of this Argument: especially if we consider, that if the Belief of a Judgment to come was not agreeable to natural Reason, it would be easy to eradicate those Fears which possess all mens Minds after they have violated the Divine Laws; for Men are very averse to every thing that occasions them Trouble and Disquiet. Now if the Fears of a future Judgment were not well founded, 'tis very strange that the Art, and Industry, and Reason of Mankind, have not long ago intirely scatter'd these Fears, since Men naturally desire Quiet and Peace within.

Moreover, if there was no real ground for these Fears, it would follow that Man, the noblest Being in this lower World, is so fram'd by the Almighty, as necessarily to torment himself, without any just reason or cause; while Creatures of an inferior Rank and Order enjoy what is suitable to their Natures without the same Anxiety or Trouble.

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* *Mr.* Hobbs, *a learned Advocate for Infidelity, us'd to be very uneasy if at any time alone in the dark, so much, he was near expiring, was under such Amazement and Confusion, that the best account he could give of himself was,* That he was about to take a Leap in the Dark.

Again,

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Again, we may conclude the Certainty of a future Judgment from the diſproportionate Diſtribution of Rewards and Puniſhments in this World. We ſee that in ſome reſpects, in this Life, all things come alike to all; there is one Event to the Righteous and the Wicked; as dieth the Fool, ſo dieth the righteous Man; he is ſwept away by the ſame common Calamity, drops by the ſame Diſeaſe, and his Duſt mingles in the ſame Grave. Now if God is infinitely Juſt and Good, as all muſt acknowledg that own the Being of a Deity; then for the diſplay of theſe, as well as his other Attributes, 'tis of abſolute neceſſity there ſhould be a future Judgment, that there may be a viſible difference made betwixt the Righteous and the Wicked, betwixt him that ſerveth God, and him that ſerveth him not. In this World the Wicked frequently proſper, and have all that Heart can wiſh; they flouriſh like a green Bay-Tree, and they have no Bands in their Death; they are not plagu'd like other Men: whereas Good Men, while here, meet with a thouſand Diſappointments, and have one Affliction treading cloſe upon the heels of another, like the Meſſengers of *Job*; ſo that they pour out their Moiſture in Floods of Tears, and ſpend their Years in Sighing. The Righteous often ſuffer in this World, in the common Calamities that are brought on Nations and Kingdoms, by Fire, and Plague, and Famine, and War: and not only ſo, but as *Job* obſerves, *The Tabernacles of the Robbers proſper, and they that provoke God are ſecure: The Proud are called happy, they that work Wickedneſs are ſet up, and they that tempt God are deliver'd.* And how does the Prophet *Jeremy*

expoſtulate upon this Head? *Wherefore doth the way of the Wicked proſper? wherefore are all they happy that deal treacherouſly?* Now nothing can ſolve theſe Difficulties, and vindicate the Juſtice of the Divine Government, but the Certainty of a future Judgment, at which time God will reward every Man according to his Works. The Wiſe-Man tells us, that he *ſaw under the Sun the place of Judgment, that Wickedneſs was there.* He had obſerv'd that Corruption had crept into Courts of Judicature, ſo as that the Innocent had been condemn'd, but the Guilty diſcharg'd. Now from God's permitting of theſe things, he infers the Certainty of a future Judgment; for he preſently adds, *I ſaid in my Heart, God ſhall judg the Righteous and the Wicked:* q. d. From the promiſcuous Diſpenſations of Divine Providence now, I am fully perſuaded there will be another State, wherein there ſhall be a juſt Diſcrimination made betwixt good and bad Men, by rewarding the former, and puniſhing the latter, according to the Deeds done in the Body.

If there be a God, he muſt be Juſt; for the Attribute of Juſtice is ſo eſſential to the Godhead, that we may as well deny there is a God, as ſay that there is one, but he is not juſt. Now if God is Juſt and Good, and it does appear that Rewards and Puniſhments are not proportion'd to the Righteous and the Wicked here, 'tis infallibly certain there ſhall be a Judgment hereafter, wherein God's Love to the one, and his Diſpleaſure againſt the other ſhall fully appear; ſo that his Juſtice and Goodneſs ſhall be conſpicuous to Angels, Men and Devils. For the greater diſproportion there is in the diſtribution of Rewards and Puniſhments

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ments in this World, the ſtronger is the Argument drawn from thence, that there will be a final Judgment in the World to come. For (as *Abraham* ſaid) *ſhall not the Judg of all the Earth do right?* I'll allow that this Argument is commonly inſiſted on for the proof of a future Judgment (as an ingenious Modern has remark'd) "But 'tis nevertheleſs ſtrongly con-"cluſive and unanſwerable; and hereby who-"ever denies a future State of Rewards and "Puniſhments, muſt of neceſſity, by a chain "of unavoidable Conſequences, be forc'd to "recur to downright Atheiſm." Gen. 18. 25.

Again, the Certainty of a future Judgment might be argu'd from the neceſſity there is of it, both to deter Men from Sin, and to incourage them in the practice of Religion. All Societies would ſoon disband, and all well-regulated Governments be exchang'd for Anarchy and Confuſion, if the Belief of a future Judgment was baniſh'd from the Earth.

For if Men run into all Exceſſes of Riot now, tho they pretend to believe a future State, what inexpreſſible Miſchiefs would follow the denial of this Doctrine? What then ſhould reſtrain any Man from gratifying his Paſſions at the expence of another's Reputation and Life, provided he could carry it ſo privately, as not to expoſe himſelf to the Penalties of human Laws? Indeed the Atheiſtical are ready to acknowledg, that the Doctrine of a future Judgment is as well calculated for the good Government of the World, and the Preſervation of Human Society, as any thing could be: which (as one obſerves) is a Conceſſion of no ſmall advantage to the Honour of our Holy Religion, conſidering that it proceeds from thoſe that are

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open and avow'd Enemies to it. For by this acknowledgment they seem to own, that if the Doctrine of a future Judgment be not true, yet 'tis very fit it should be true, or at least 'tis very necessary that all reasonable Creatures that live in Society should believe it to be so.

Now if this Doctrine is so necessary to the good Government of the World, then 'tis more than probable there will be a future State of Rewards and Punishments; because it would reflect on the Perfections of God to suppose, that he has form'd Human Creatures after such a manner, that they cannot be conveniently govern'd without the belief of a Falshood.

I know some have advanc'd, That Vertue is its own Reward, and that Vice is Punishment enough to it self. But whoever reflects on the Conduct of those Philosophers that have inserted these Notions in their Writings, will find, that their Lusts and Passions were too strong for their Philosophy. I confess there are those Excellencies in Vertue, those powerful Attractives in real Goodness, that ought to determine our Choice, if there were no assurance of a future Reward: there is also something so unreasonable and so dishonourable to human Nature in Vice, that ought to make every Man abhor it, tho there were no Hell to punish it.

But alas, so great is the Depravity of human Nature, and so strong and violent are their Propensions to Sin, that even a Pagan has observ'd, That 'twas necessary to suppose a future State of Punishments, as the only effectual restraint

reſtraint from Vice; that (as he ſays *) *wicked Men might be under ſome Reſtraint in this Life: The Antients were of Opinion, there were certain Puniſhments appointed in the future State for impious Perſons; well knowing, that if theſe were deny'd, Death it ſelf would no longer be dreadful.*

Now if the Belief of a future Judgment is abſolutely neceſſary to deter Men from Sin, and to furniſh them with ſutable Motives for Vertue and Religion; if 'tis neceſſary for the ſecurity and ſupport of Human Society, we may reaſonably conclude, that there will be a day when *every Man ſhall give an account of himſelf to God.*

Again, the Certainty of a future Judgment might be argu'd from the ſuppoſition of the Soul's Immortality; which Opinion has been almoſt univerſally believ'd and entertain'd in the World. It may alſo be infer'd from the ſtrong Deſires of Immortality, that ſeem to be interwoven with our Being, and implanted in the Minds of all Mankind. I might alſo add to theſe rational Conſiderations, a vaſt number of Teſtimonies from Pagan Writers: For 'tis remarkable, that the antient † Fathers in their Apologies for the Chriſtian Religion, lay down the Doctrine of a future Judgment, as an Article which the *Gentiles* had already aſſented to.

Now over and above theſe rational Conſiderations to induce our Belief of a future Judgment, we have the moſt ample Teſtimonies of the Truth of this Doctrine in Divine Reve-

* *Cic. Catil.* 4. ——Ut aliqua in vita formido improbis eſſet, apud inferos ejuſmodi quædam illi antiqui ſupplicia impiis conſtituta eſſe voluerunt; quod videlicet intelligebant, his remotis, non eſſe mortem ipſam pertimeſcendam.

† Juſtin Martyr, Tertullian, &c.

lation; especially in the Writings of the New Testament, tho the Old is not without express proofs of this important Article of Faith. *Solomon* asserts it in our Text, and several other places in the same Book. And the Apostle *Jude* informs us, that there was a very early Discovery of this Truth, even to those that liv'd before the Flood: *And* Enoch *also, the seventh from* Adam, *propheſy'd of these, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly Deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard Speeches which ungodly Sinners have spoken against him.*

I know that many learned Men think, that this Text refers to God's Judicial Proceedings against the old World, when he destroy'd it with Water; yet such do not deny but that the Prophet *Enoch* might have a further meaning, and intend also to ascertain the final Judgment. But however that be, there are abundance of other Texts that do fully prove it:

Acts 17. 31. St. *Paul* is express, *That God hath appointed a Day, in the which he will judg the World in Righteousness.* Our Saviour himself tells us,

Mat. 16. 27. *The Son of Man shall come in the Glory of his Father with his Angels, and then he shall reward every Man according to his Work.* And the Apostle *Peter* affirms, that Christ gave his Disciples a special Charge to preach this Doctrine of a Judgment to come: *And he commanded us to preach unto the People, and to testify that it is he which was ordain'd of God to be the Judg of Quick and Dead.*

Again, the Author to the *Hebrews* not only assures us, that *'tis appointed unto Men once to die;*

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die; but he affirms alſo, *that after this is the Judgment.* Thus have I prov'd the Certainty of a Judgment to come, from Reaſon and Revelation; and can any one deſire greater Aſſurance than this, for any future Event? We are as certain that there will be a future Judgment, as if it were already paſt, or as if we now ſaw the Heavens opening, and the Judg coming, and heard the Sound of the laſt Trump, that ſhall awaken the Dead. How ſhould the Conſideration then of this awful Truth ſtrike a damp upon the criminal Mirth of Sinners, and cauſe young People frequently to ask themſelves what is neceſſary to be done, that they may ſtand in Judgment! But I haſten to the ſecond thing; and that is, to conſider the Extent of this Judgment: which I ſhall do, both as to Perſons and Things.

Firſt, All human Perſons ſhall be judg'd. The Scriptures indeed are very expreſs concerning the fallen Angels, that they ſhall be judg'd; and therefore 'tis ſaid, *They are reſerv'd in everlaſting Chains, under Darkneſs, to the Judgment of the Great Day.* Jude v. 6. But my Text obliges me only to diſcourſe of God's judging of Mankind. And that the whole Human Race ſhall be ſummon'd to Judgment, is abundantly evident from the Chriſtian Revelation. St. *Paul* ſays, ——*We ſhall all ſtand before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt. For it is written, As I live, ſaith the Lord, every Knee ſhall bow to me, and every Tongue ſhall confeſs to God. So then every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelf to God.* Rom. 13. 10, 11, 12. That Generation of Men that ſhall be alive at our Saviour's ſecond coming, ſhall not prevent thoſe that ſleep in the Duſt; for as all the Dead ſhall be rais'd, ſo all the Living ſhall be

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chang'd, and all of both ſhall be judg'd. The Apoſtles were commiſſion'd (as I hinted before) to *preach to the People, that Jeſus ſhall be the Judg of Quick and Dead.* The like Phraſe we alſo meet with elſewhere: *Who ſhall give an account to him, who is ready to judg the Quick and the Dead*; *i. e.* all that ſhall be alive when the Judg cometh, and all that have died from the beginning of the World to that day, ſhall be brought to Judgment. God is call'd, by way of Eminency, *The Judg of all the Earth.* And 'tis repreſented, that *when Chriſt ſhall ſit upon the Throne of his Glory, all Nations ſhall be gather'd before him.*

Acts 10. 42.

1 Pet. 4. 5.

Gen. 18. 25.

Mat. 25. 32.

'Tis not the Quality or Circumſtances of any, that will excuſe them from appearing at the Bar of Chriſt: But all Perſons of every Nation, Language, Kindred and Tongue, ſhall be ſummon'd to the Tribunal of the Son of God: High and Low, Rich and Poor, Male and Female, Young and Old, Learned and Ignorant, Barbarous and Civiliz'd, the Good and Bad, muſt all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt. Such as now refuſe to approach a Throne of Grace, ſhall then, however unwilling, be forc'd to make their appearance before a Court of Juſtice. All civil Diſtinctions will be loſt in the other World; Potentates and Princes ſhall ſtand upon the ſame level with Servants and Slaves. And agreeable to this is the Repreſentation which St. *John* makes of the final Judgment: *And the Kings of the Earth, and the Great Men, and the Rich Men, and the Chief Captains, and the Mighty Men, and every Bondman, and every Free-man, hid themſelves in the Dens, and in the Rocks of the Mountains; and ſaid to the Mountains and Rocks, Fall on us, and hide*

Rev. 6. 15, 16, 17.

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hide us from the face of him that ſitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb: for the great Day of his Wrath is come, and who ſhall be able to ſtand? This will be a great Day indeed, not only with regard to the Appearance of the Judg, who ſhall come with all the enſigns of Pomp and Terror; but alſo with reſpect to that infinite number of Perſons of all ranks and conditions, that ſhall then appear to be judg'd, and who notwithſtanding all their vain attempts to conceal themſelves, cannot go from the ſight of their Judg, nor eſcape that Sentence which will determine their State for ever. And indeed if God ſhould not call one Man to an account as well as another, it would be a Reflection upon his diſtributive Juſtice; and he would appear to be a Reſpecter of Perſons, than which nothing can be a greater reflection on the ſupreme Judg: *Who accepteth not the Perſons of Princes, nor accepteth the Rich more than the Poor; for they are all the work of his hands.* And St. *John* in his Viſion tells us, That *he ſaw the Dead, both ſmall and great, ſtanding before God; and the Books were open'd, and the Dead were judg'd out of the things which were written in thoſe Books; and the Sea gave up the Dead which were in it, and Death and the Grave gave up the Dead which were in them: and they were judg'd every man according to their Works.* Job 34. 18, 19.

2. We are to conſider the Extent of the Future Judgment, with reſpect to Things. For as it ſhall reach all Perſons, ſo it ſhall be extended to all Things. The Wiſe-Man tells us, That *God ſhall bring every Work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.* And ſhall the Sins of the Eccleſ. 12. 14.

Righte-

Righteous as well as the Wicked be brought into Judgment? The Sins of the Righteous ſhall never be ſo mention'd at that day, as to bring them under any Shame and Confuſion: for Shame and Confuſion are part of the Puniſhment of the Damn'd; and we are aſſur'd that the Righteous ſhall not riſe to be puniſh'd, but rewarded.

Again, If the Sins of the Righteous ſhould be mention'd in Judgment, it ſhall be to illuſtrate the Glory of God's free Grace in the pardoning of them; and to engage and excite thoſe bleſſed Souls to admire and adore the infinite extent of the Divine Love, as 'tis diſplay'd in the Purchaſe of their Pardon by the Blood of the Lamb. Tho I confeſs, I am at preſent inclin'd to think, that thoſe Sins which God caſts behind his back here, and blots out as a thick cloud, will never be mention'd in the laſt Judgment; and that it will be only the Good-works of the Righteous and the Sins of the Wicked, that ſhall be brought into Judgment.

'Tis a groſs miſtake that moſt wicked Men indulge themſelves in, who imagine that Thoughts are free, and that they may think what they pleaſe without being criminal; whereas the Apoſtle *Paul*, ſpeaking of the Day of Judgment, calls it, *The Day when God ſhall judg the Secrets of Men by Jeſus Chriſt.*——

Rom. 2. 16.

All the vain Deſires and ill Purpoſes that Men form in their Minds, every proud, luſtful, blaſphemous, revengeful Thought ſhall be accounted for in the great Day of Retribution, as well as their Words and Actions. And this may be argu'd from the Nature of theſe things: for if the Heart be the Source from which Sin

Sin ſprings, and if the Deſign and Intention, ſtrictly conſider'd, be the formal difference of moral Good and Evil; theſe, I ſay, being corrupt and bad, no other Conſideration whatſoever can alter the nature of ſuch things, and make them good: and therefore they being criminal, ſhall be accounted for when the Lord cometh, *Who will bring to light the hidden things of Darkneſs, and will make manifeſt the Counſels of the Heart.* The Phariſees of old imagin'd indeed that they might indulge themſelves in wanton and revengeful Thoughts: but our Bleſſed Saviour tells them plainly in his Sermon on the Mount, That if they indulge impure Deſires and cauſleſs Anger, they break thoſe Precepts that forbid Adultery and Murder. 1 Cor. 4. 5.

Again, We muſt give an account of our Words as well as our Thoughts. How diſagreeable ſoever this may be to thoſe who ſay their Tongues are their own, who is Lord over them? yet 'tis certainly true. For as the Apoſtle *James* obſerves, *Tho the Tongue is a little Member, it boaſteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the Tongue is a fire, a world of Iniquity: ſo is the Tongue among our Members, that it defileth the whole Body, and ſetteth on fire the courſe of Nature, and it is ſet on fire of Hell.* Now if our Words have ſo ill an influence on Mankind, 'tis very reaſonable that we ſhould be accountable for theſe, as well as thoſe ſinful Actions conſequent upon them. When the Judg cometh, he ſhall not only *convince Men of their ungodly Deeds*, but of *all their hard Speeches which ungodly Sinners have ſpoken againſt him.* How awful are thoſe Expreſſions of our Saviour! James 3. 5, 6. Jude v. 15.

Mat. 12. 36, 37. viour! *But I ſay unto you, that every idle word that Men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an account thereof in the Day of Judgment; for by thy Words thou ſhalt be juſtify'd, and by thy Words thou ſhalt be condemn'd.* If this be true, as certainly it is, what will thoſe do, where ſhall they appear, that have repreſented our Lord as an Impoſtor, who make no other mention of his Blood and Wounds, than by their Oaths and Imprecations to profane them; and make that very Record which God hath given of his Son, the Subject of their Ridicule and Banter? If Men ſhall be accountable for all thoſe words that do not anſwer the original Deſign of Speech, what a heavy account will they have to give, whoſe leud Diſcourſes have led others into Sin; whoſe paſſionate and revengeful Expreſſions have made them appear more like Furies than Men; who by officious Lyes and malicious Slanders have ſtab'd the Reputation of Good Men, and drawn down an Odium on Religion it ſelf? Again, all your ſecret Sins, as well as thoſe that are viſible to the world, muſt be accounted for: what you have committed in the Cloſet and in the Chamber, when you thought that no Eye had ſeen you, ſhall be publickly examin'd in the great Day of our Lord's appear-

Prov. 5. 21. ing. *The ways of Man* now *are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings. He*

Pſ. 139. 2. *knoweth our paths and our lying down, and is acquainted with all our ways. There is no darkneſs,*

Job 34. 22. *nor ſhadow of death, where the Workers of Iniquity may hide themſelves.* Now as all things you do in this World, tho ever ſo ſecret, are open to the view of an Omniſcient God, they ſhall moſt certainly be conſider'd, and ſeverely ſcann'd at the laſt Tribunal. No ſecret Impurity, no diſſem-

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diſſembled Malice, no artificial Hypocriſy or ſubtle Fraud, can be conceal'd from the Judg of Quick and Dead. *For there is nothing cover'd that ſhall not be reveal'd, neither hid that ſhall not be known. Therefore whatſoever ye have ſpoken in darkneſs, ſhall be heard in the light; and that which ye have ſpoken in the ear in cloſets, ſhall be proclaim'd on the houſe-tops.* Many People are ſo atheiſtical and fooliſh, as to imagine that if they ſin ſecretly and in the dark, they are very ſecure; forgetting that *the Darkneſs hideth not from God, but the Night ſhineth as the Day; the Darkneſs and the Light are both alike to him.* Luke 12.34.

Again, We ſhall be call'd to an account for neglecting to do the good which was in our power to do, and for not improving the various Talents committed to our Truſt: *To him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is Sin.* And (ſays our Saviour) *that Servant which knew his Lord's Will, and prepar'd not himſelf, neither did according to his Will, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes.* The generality of People, 'tis to be fear'd, think that the frequent Neglects of Duty are but venial Sins; or elſe why do ſo many content themſelves, if they do but abſtain from ſome notorious Vices, tho they take no care at all to practiſe the contrary Vertues? How few that have great Eſtates, ever conſider what proportion of Tribute they owe to the ſupport of Religion, or what they are oblig'd to do in charity to the Poor! forgetting, without doubt, what our Saviour ſays, *Unto whomſoever much is given, of him much ſhall be requir'd.* We find in the Repreſentation that is given us of the final Proceſs, that the Judg accuſes and condemns Sinners for their Omiſ- Jam. 4. 17. Luke 12.48.

Mat. 25. 41. Omiſſions: *Then ſhall he ſay alſo unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting Fire, prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a ſtranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; ſick and in priſon, and ye viſited me not.* We alſo learn from the Parable of the *Talents*, that not to improve what we are intruſted with, will expoſe us to the diſpleaſure of our Judg: The unhappy Man mention'd in the Parable had not ſquander'd away his Talent, but *hid it in the Earth*, never made any improvement of it; upon which his Talent is taken from him, he is pronounc'd an unprofitable Servant, and conſign'd over to the dark and diſmal Regions below, where there is perpetual weeping and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth. We likewiſe find that the fooliſh Virgins were deny'd entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven, becauſe they neglected to get *Oil in their Lamps*. How ſhould this awaken the Conſideration of thoſe, who dream away the firſt and beſt part of their time in ſloth and idleneſs, and wholly neglect to look after the one thing needful, and to prepare themſelves for the laſt Tribunal! Remember, O ſtupid Man, that thou ſhalt be accountable for all the Advantages God gives thee of ſerving him in this World; for thy Power and Intereſt, thy Eſtate and Time, for thy Health and Strength, and for all thy intellectual Abilities. Moreover, conſider that thou ſhalt be judg'd not only for thine own Sins, but the Sins of other Men, ſo far as thou haſt been the cauſe of them: And if this be ſo, how much does it concern Miniſters, Magiſtrates, Parents, and Maſters

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Maſters of Families, to ſet good examples, and to do their utmoſt to prevent ſuch Peoples falling into ſin, who are under their ſpecial care? *Eli*'s omitting to reſtrain the vile Practices of his Sons, drew down the Divine Diſpleaſure upon himſelf. I would to God we all might ſeriouſly think of this, and be very cautious leſt we contribute towards the Sins and Follies of other Men, either by conſenting to them, or giving them advice and aſſiſtance to compaſs their ill deſigns, or by uſing any arguments to corrupt their Judgment, or ſtop the mouth of Conſcience. To be damn'd alone, is dreadful beyond expreſſion; but to go to Hell, drawing after us vaſt multitudes of thoſe we have tempted to ſin, will expoſe us to a double Damnation.

Finally, All the Aggravations of our Sins ſhall be look'd into and examin'd; and we ſhall be judg'd not only for thoſe that have been committed againſt the Light of our Minds, and the Remonſtrances of Conſcience, but alſo for Sins of Ignorance: You ſhall not only be call'd to an account for what you know of your Duty, and yet have neglected, but for that which you have not known, yet might have known, becauſe you were favour'd with the means and advantages of knowing it. If the Heathens are inexcuſable for ſtifling the feebler Convictions of natural Light, and for the groſs Conceptions they had of Almighty God, when they might have eaſily diſcern'd his Perfections from the Works of Nature; how much more inexcuſable ſhall they be, who remain groſly ignorant in a Land of Light, and with that Book in their hands, *wherein Life and Immortality are brought to light?* Affected Ignorance

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must needs be criminal, notwithstanding the Honour that is confer'd upon it by the Roman Church, which makes it *the Mother of their Devotion*. That Man who is willingly ignorant, that he may indulge himself in Vice, and in the neglect of his Duty to God, chuses Sin with its penal effects; and if he is damn'd, he does but inherit his own Choice.

Now as all the Sins of the Wicked shall be look'd into and punish'd, so all the Good-works of the Righteous, how secretly soever they have been perform'd here, shall hereafter be openly rewarded. When our Saviour gives direction about secret Prayer, he adds this encouraging Motive; *Thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.* 'Tis remarkable that in the description of the last Judgment, our Blessed Saviour takes special notice of the Charity of Good Men, and before all the world acknowledges that he took it as kindly as if he himself had actually receiv'd their Alms; and therefore after he had invited them to enter on their Inheritance, and to receive their Reward, he adds, *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me.* God will not be unrighteous, to forget your Work and Labour of Love. But,

Mat. 6. 6.

Mat. 25. 35, 36.

3. We are to discourse of the Righteousness and Impartiality with which the last Judgment shall be administer'd.

The Administration of the future Judgment belongs to God; for he is the supreme Governour of the Universe: And as he has given Laws to the World, so 'tis a branch of his Sovereignty

vereignty to judg Men by thoſe Rules he has given them. But however, 'tis very plainly reveal'd in the Holy Scriptures, that the future Judgment ſhall be adminiſter'd by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as he is God-Man, or Mediator: *The Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son.* And we are aſſur'd that *God has appointed a Day, in the which he will judg the World in Righteouſneſs by that Man whom he hath ordain'd, whereof he hath given aſſurance unto all Men, in that he hath rais'd him from the dead.* Acts 17. 31. Now Chriſt as God poſſeſſes all Perfections equal with the Father; and as Man he is *holy, harmleſs, undefil'd, and ſeparate from Sinners.* And he is deſcrib'd in Scripture by his *loving of Righteouſneſs, and hating of Iniquity.* And the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaking of him, ſays, *He ſhall not judg after the ſight of his eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with Righteouſneſs ſhall he judg the Poor.* Iſa. 11. 2, 3. He will proceed with all Men impartially; no external Appearances ſhall engage his Favour, or increaſe his Severity. He'll examine every Cauſe thorowly, without any partial regard to one more than another; for as St. *Peter* obſerves, *He without reſpect of Perſons judgeth all Men.* In human Judicatures, Juſtice is ſometimes perverted, the Innocent are condemn'd, and the Guilty acquitted; but at the laſt Judgment every one ſhall have a fair and equal trial: for the Judg will proceed with all Men according to the Laws they have liv'd under. *For as many as have ſinn'd without Law, ſhall alſo periſh without Law; and as many as have ſinn'd in the Law, ſhall be judg'd by the Law.* Rom. 2. 12. But ſuch as have had the unſpeakable Advantages of the Goſpel-Revelation, ſhall be proceeded with according

Rom. 2. 16. to that Rule: therefore ſays St. *Paul, God will judg the Secrets of Men by Chriſt Jeſus, according to my Goſpel.* Every Man may know in this Life how it will go with him in the next, if he will impartially examine himſelf by the Divine Word: for all thoſe whom the Goſpel pronounces righteous, the Judg will acquit; but ſuch whom the Goſpel condemns for their Wickedneſs, ſhall not ſtand in Judgment.

Rom. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. *God will render to every Man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality; Eternal Life. But to them that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteouſneſs, Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguiſh upon every Soul of Man that doth evil, of the* Jew *firſt, and alſo of the* Gentile. *But Glory, Honour, and Peace to every Man that worketh good; to the* Jew *firſt, and alſo to the* Gentile: *for there is no reſpect of Perſons with God.* Some have had the vanity and folly to ſay, that they doubted not but God Almighty would have ſome regard to their Extraction and Quality, and make ſome allowances to them more than to others of an inferior rank, when they ſhould appear before his Tribunal: But the Scriptures are expreſs, that God regards no Man in Judgment for his external Circumſtances, but will proceed with the ſame ſteddineſs and impartiality with the Rich as the Poor: *God is no Reſpecter of Perſons; but in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteouſneſs, is accepted with him.* But,

Acts 10. 34, 35.

4. We are to conſider the immediate Conſequences of the future Judgment, both with regard to the Righteous and the Wicked: *The Wicked ſhall go away into everlaſting Puniſhment,*

Mat. 25. 46.

but

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but the Righteous into Life eternal. To all good Men the Judg will say, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepar'd for you from the Foundation of the World:* But to all the Wicked, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels.* These different Sentences shall determine the final State of good and bad Men for ever: Therefore 'tis call'd in Scripture *the Eternal Judgment*, from which there can be no Appeal. I shall not now go about to describe the Joy of those happy Souls who at that time shall be acquitted, or the Misery and Torment of those that shall then be condemn'd; but only observe, that the Sentence of the Judg will fix both the one and the other in an unalterable state.

Mat. 25. 34.

Ver. 41.

Thus have I gone over the two general Heads of Discourse I propos'd to insist upon: It only remains, that I tell you what use we should make of this awful Subject, sutable to the sad Solemnities of a Funeral. And tho divers Inferences might be properly deduc'd from this Discourse, I shall only at present address my self to two sorts of Persons, and so conclude. And,

(1.) If it's so unreasonable, as you have heard, for young People to *walk in the way of their hearts, and in the sight of their eyes*; how much more is it so, for those to act thus, who are advanc'd in years? For antient People to act with the precipitation and rashness of Youth, to abandon themselves to extravagant Mirth and Jollity; is one of the most unreasonable and absurd things in the world. Yet how many, that are ready to drop into the grave, please themselves with the glitter and pomp of this World, and are continually running into

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all exceſſes of riot! Surely the time paſt is more than enough, that thou haſt ſpent in Sin and Folly: Is thy Sun juſt ſetting, and art thou as vain as in the heat of Youth? Art thou on the brink of the grave, and yet as prodigal of thy Time as if thou hadſt an Age before thee? Good God! what folly, what madneſs are theſe People guilty of? *Oh that they did but know the things that belong to their Peace, before they are hid from their eyes!* Oh that I could but prevail with antient People, who have ſpent all their days in ſin and folly, to pauſe a little, and think over what they have been doing, and what an account they are able to give of their Time and Talents to the Judg of the World! Methinks thoſe that are old in ſin ſhould bluſh and be confounded, when they ſee young ones devoted to God betimes, who have made a progreſs in Religion, and are almoſt ripe for Heaven; while they, unhappy People! have not taken one ſtep towards it, but have been all their lives *treaſuring up wrath againſt the day of wrath, and the fearful Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God. Awake, awake, thou that ſleepeſt! Ariſe from the Dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee Light!* Delay not one moment longer; flee to Jeſus the only Saviour, leſt your Hearts ſhould be harden'd thro the Deceitfulneſs of Sin.

(2.) To you that are young, to whom the Wiſe-Man principally addreſſes himſelf. If the future Judgment is ſo certain and ſo extenſive, and ſhall be impartially adminiſter'd and attended with ſuch awful Conſequences as you have heard; then how reaſonable is it, that you often think on this Judgment, and ſpeedily prepare for it?

If

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If you believe there ſhall be a future Judgment, often meditate upon it; and ſeriouſly conſider *what manner of Perſons ye ought to be in all holy Converſation and Godlineſs, waiting for and haſtening unto the coming of the day of God.* 2 Pet. 3. 11, 12. Often think with your ſelves, that you ſee the Son of Man coming in flaming Fire, to take vengeance on them that know not God, nor obey the Goſpel; that you ſee the Throne fix'd, and the Books open'd, out of which you are to be judg'd; that you hear the ſound of the laſt Trump, ſaying, *Ariſe ye Dead, and come to Judgment.* If thou didſt but often think thus, and get thy Faith ſtrengthen'd in this great Article, it would certainly have the ſame effect upon thee, as if all theſe things were actually preſent. And conſider with thy ſelf, that if this Day be ſo amazing at a diſtance, that the thoughts of it even chill your Blood and Spirits; with what inexpreſſible horror ſhall unprepar'd Sinners be ſtruck, when it comes to be preſent! Will you not think of this, O ye diſſolute Sinners? Now, it may be, you are admir'd and careſs'd for the profane Sallies of your Wit, when you reflect on a crucify'd Saviour; but what will you do when the Judg cometh? and how near the laſt great and terrible Day is, we cannot tell: *For it will come as a Thief in the night, and as a Snare upon all them that dwell on the face of the whole Earth.* But however that be, whenever you are ſeiz'd by Death, you'll be paſt all Opportunities of correcting the Diſorders of Life; ſo that the danger of being unprepar'd for Death muſt needs be the ſame as to be unprepar'd for the Day of Judgment: for the Day of Death will as effectually determine the State of individual

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Perſons, as the laſt Judgment ſhall that of the whole World. Therefore in the height of all your Pleaſure, pauſe a little, and conſider, *That for all theſe things God will bring you into Judgment*; and labour that, whether preſent or abſent, you may be accepted of God in Chriſt: As was the Care of that young Perſon, who deſir'd that this Text might be preach'd on at his Funeral, hoping probably that it would be of ſome uſe to thoſe young People that might ſurvive him.

Mr. *George Stennett* was well known to you in this Aſſembly, concerning whom I have ſeveral things to ſay that are praiſe-worthy, and that deſerve the imitation of young People. He conſecrated himſelf very early to the Service of the Sacred Trinity in Holy Baptiſm: and when he had thus evidenc'd his Love to the Redeemer, by ſubmitting to his Authority and Example, he did not imagine that his Work was done, but did frequently look into his State, and examin'd himſelf by thoſe Characters he found deſcriptive of true Chriſtians in the Word of God.

It pleas'd God to exerciſe him with a languiſhing Sickneſs for ſeveral months, till his Body was waſted and decay'd: Sometimes he had Doubts and Fears, and thro the Temptations of Satan was ready to queſtion his Intereſt in Chriſt, and did moſt importunately deſire the Aſſurance of the Love of God: and, what was very remarkable in his Sickneſs, he retain'd an extraordinary Tenderneſs of Conſcience, being afraid of every thing that look'd like Sin. In the former part of his Illneſs, he was deſirous to live: but when he drew near the

the Period of his Days, and God had given a very ſignal Return to his Prayers, and had lifted up the Light of his Countenance upon his Soul, and heightned his Hope into full Aſſurance; he could then rejoice in the near Views of Death, with *Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory.* And now I am ſpeaking of God's anſwering his Prayers, it may not be improper to mention, that about four Hours before his Death he pray'd with a great deal of Submiſſion to the Divine Will, that his Paſſage into the other World might be eaſy, and that, as a Token for good, God would be pleas'd to grant him a little Reſt. He had no ſooner ended his Prayer, but he fell aſleep for above two hours, which was more than he had done for ſome time before; and when he awoke, 'tis not to be expreſs'd with what Thankfulneſs and Joy he ſpake of the Divine Goodneſs: "How good "is God (ſays he) to me, that he ſhould hear "my Prayer, and condeſcend to anſwer my "poor Petition in the very punctilio of it? "This is an Encouragement for us to believe, "that God will anſwer the other part of my "Petition alſo, and that I ſhall have an eaſy "Paſſage."

And as 'twas ſaid of *Stephen*, That his Face ſhone, ſo I am told by thoſe who ſaw him expire, That the extreme Joy of his Mind ſpread ſuch a Serenity and Alacrity in his Countenance, that no words can deſcribe; much leſs can I tell you what Satisfaction reign'd in his Mind. He was got above the Fears of Death, or the Deſires of Life; for he declar'd, "That he would not come back "for a Thouſand nor a Thouſand, yea not "for Ten Thouſand Worlds. I am going,

" ſaid he, where I long to be, in my Father's " Houſe that is not made with Hands, whoſe " Builder and Maker is God, Eternal in the " Heavens. Oh I am going to the bleſſed Je- " ſus, and to the innumerable Company of " Angels, and the Spirits of Juſt Men made " perfect! I am going juſt now, preſently, " preſently, to ſee him Face to Face as he is, " and not in a Glaſs. Oh I am in pain till I " am there! I long to be at home with my " Heavenly Father, and with the Bleſſed Je- " ſus, that I may enjoy him for ever!" Then bowing (as he ſat in his Chair) to each Perſon in the room, he took his ſolemn leave of them, in hope, as he ſaid, to meet them again in Heaven; but ſtretch'd out his Hand to one of his Brothers with more than ordinary earneſtneſs, exhorting him more than once to forſake his Sins.

And as long as he could raiſe his dying Arms, he wav'd them to ſhew his Joy and Triumph; and while he ſat ſmiling, the Union betwixt Soul and Body eaſily diſſolv'd, and his Spirit fled to the Regions of Eternal Bliſs. Let us not therefore ſorrow as thoſe without hope; for if we believe that Jeſus dy'd and roſe again, even ſo thoſe that ſleep in Jeſus will God bring with him.

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AN ACCOUNT OF Mr. *John Pilkington's* PUBLICK RECANTATION OF THE Errors of the Romiſh Church:

Containing alſo the Means and Manner of his Conviction, *&c.* Which he pronounc'd before a Congregation of Proteſtant Diſſenters, meeting in *Hart-ſtreet, Covent-Garden,* on the 28*th* of *May,* 1699.

Publiſh'd by Mr. *Piggott.*

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Before Mr. *Pilkington* read his Retractation, Mr. *Piggott* addreſſed himſelf to the Auditory and him in the following words.

HRISTIAN Auditors, I am at this time to acquaint you, that there is one preſent in this Aſſembly, who having been educated in the Popiſh Religion, after many inward Conflicts, does profeſs himſelf to be thorowly convinc'd of the Errors he had imbib'd while he continu'd in that Communion; and being deſirous to be admitted a Member of this Proteſtant Church, he has declar'd his willingneſs to ſignify to this Congregation the Means and Manner of his Conviction, and the Reaſons of his forſaking the Erroneous and Idolatrous Church of Rome. *The Perſon of whom I now ſpeak, that profeſſes to be truly penitent, as well as convinc'd of his former Errors, is Mr.* John Pilkington, *who was lately a Novice in the Benedictin Order of Monks in the Monaſtery of St.* Edmund *in* Paris. *And now, Sirs, let me entreat you to baniſh from your Minds all Prepoſſeſſion and Prejudice,*

dice, and impartially attend to what he will presently pronounce; let me beseech you to put on Bowels of Mercy; don't usurp the Authority of God, and pretend to search his Heart: for my own part, Charity obliges me to believe that he is sincere; my blessed Lord having left me no other Rule to judg of the Goodness or Badness of a Tree, but by its Fruits.

And now, Mr. Pilkington, *I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels, and in the presence of this numerous Auditory, that you speak nothing but the Truth: if you are conscious to your self of any base Ends in the Recantation you are come to make, confess and give Glory to God; for the God whom we serve, and under whose Banner you desire to be enroll'd, cannot be deceiv'd, and will not be mock'd. Sir, you and I must shortly appear before the Judg of the Quick and Dead; and if you should be insincere, I, that now thus exhort and admonish you, must be a swift Witness against you at the great Assize. And now I call God to Record this day, that I am clear of your Blood; and I call every one in this place to witness of the solemn Charge I have given to you: if therefore you are sincere, (of which I would not admit a doubt) go on by the Grace of God to pronounce your written Narrative and Recantation.*

And then Mr. *Pilkington* read as follows.

Mr.

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Mr. *John Pilkington's* NARRATIVE.

FOR the Satisfaction of all my Countrymen and Brethren in general, and of this worthy Congregation in particular, whereof I am desirous to be a Member, I beg your attention to the following Narrative, which contains the Means and Manner of my Conviction.

In order hereunto, I think it necessary to acquaint you with some part of my Life past; which as it will evidence a particular Goodness and Mercy of God towards me, so I hope it may give this Auditory some grounds to judg of the Reality of my Repentance.

After my Education of five Years and a half by Romish Emissaries in *England*, I was judg'd, by the proficiency I had made in the Mysteries of Popery, not unfit for the Interest of their Cause, and therefore sent to the *English* Seminary at *Lisbon*, in order to be duly qualified for the Mission.

What

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What erroneous Notions, and almoſt inſuperable Prejudices, in Matters of Religion, I there inſenſibly imbibed, 'tis eaſy for any Perſon to imagine, who has but an imperfect *Idea* of the Virulency and rigid Severity thoſe Nations are poſſeſs'd with, where the Inquiſition rages, againſt all Perſuaſions differing from their own.

The Education I receiv'd in that place, for the ſpace of three Years and upwards, had ſo powerful an influence on my Mind, that, the better to ſecure my Soul from the Dangers of *Hereſy*, (for that was the Notion I had conceived of *Proteſtancy*) I was reſolv'd to quit all thoughts of becoming a Miſſionary Prieſt, and betake my ſelf to a Religious State. But the Preſident of our College, unwilling to loſe one of his Flock, and withal apprehenſive of my Friends Reſentments, who deſign'd me for other Ends; hearing I had made Intereſt with Monks of a certain Order, and had obtain'd their Conſent to be admitted to their Habit, quickly put a ſtop to my Deſign, by his frequent applications to the Pope's Nuncio. This unexpected Diſappointment was not only Fuel of great Heats and Animoſities to the two Houſes, but likewiſe exaſperated me to that degree, that I refus'd to perform thoſe Duties to which the Conſtitutions of the College oblig'd me, and deſir'd to be diſmiſs'd in order to my return into *England*; tho I were ſatisfied, my Friends would be highly diſguſted at my proceedings.

This Thought continuing, I reſolv'd to ſearch into the Doctrines of the Church of *England*; not doubting but that, if I could perſuade my ſelf of a poſſibility of Salvation out

of

of the Church of *Rome*, I ſhould meet with other Friends in *England*, to maintain me at one of the Univerſities. In purſuance of this Reſolution, I acquainted Mr. *Colbatch*, Miniſter of the *Engliſh* Factory (whom I had diſcours'd three times before about controverted Points in Religion) with my Deſign; and withal deſired his Recommendation to ſome of the Clergy of *England*, who might be aſſiſting to me in my inquiry after the Truth. He wrote a Letter to the Biſhop of *Salisbury*'s Chaplain; but he being out of Town upon my arrival at *London*, I was forc'd to apply my ſelf to others, who made me known to the Arch-Biſhop of *Canterbury*.

The great Incouragements I met with at this juncture, diſpell'd for the preſent all apprehenſions of my Soul's future State; and Prejudice giving way to the glittering hopes of Preferment, I forgot the Reſolution I had made, of not forſaking the Romiſh Communion, till I were ſatisfied I might be ſaved out of it. I ſaid I had found the Truth, and thought ſo too, during this ſhort retreat of my Prejudice, when I had hardly begun to ſearch after it. Upon my requeſt to take Orders in the Church of *England*, I was ſent to *Oxford*. Here Prejudice again took place, tho I ſtrove all I could to ſtifle and ſuppreſs it, together with its Conſequents, the Doubts and Scruples that roſe in my Mind, to the diſadvantage of Proteſtancy: yet all endeavours fell ſhort of the deſired Effect, the quieting of my troubled Conſcience.

The Preferments that were promis'd me, tho very conſiderable, and the Civilities I found

found in the Univerſity, tho far above my expectation, were Bands too weak to keep me (after four Terms ſpent in the Univerſity) from eaſing my Conſcience of its burden, by a ſhameful and wicked return to the Church of *Rome*.

Upon my re-admiſſion into that Communion, I ſubmitted to the fooliſh Penance of a Pilgrimage, to be perform'd on foot, and by begging, from *London* to *Holy-Well* in *Wales*; and after eighteen Months, the Peace being concluded with *France*, I was admitted to the Habit of a Benedictin Monk, in the *Engliſh* Monaſtery of St. *Edmund* in *Paris*; in which I continued near a Year. But here I am forc'd, through an exceſs of Admiration, to cry out with the Apoſtle, *O the depth of the Riches, both of the Wiſdom and Knowledg of God! How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways paſt finding out!* Rom. 11. 33. For the Divine Providence ſo order'd it, that that very place deſign'd by Satan for trepanning the Souls of Men into eternal Perdition, became an effectual Inſtrument of opening my Eyes, and freeing me from that Cloud of more than *Egyptian* Darkneſs, which had ſo long hinder'd me from diſcerning the Bottomleſs Pit I was haſtening into; and ſo it was an effectual means of baniſhing all manner of Prejudice, and making me that in Reality, which before I was but in Effigy; that is to ſay, a true and real Proteſtant. 'Twas a deſire of ſeeing whether the ſtrange things I had read and heard of the Profeſſors of this Life, had any colour of Truth to ſupport them, that inſpired me with a more than uſual curioſity, to obſerve and inſpect narrowly into all their practices. Nor did I find the Province very difficult; for beſides that

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that I was preſent at all Conventual Duties, I was privy to moſt of their ſecret Intrigues, by ſupplying the place of Secretary of the Convent, the Secretary himſelf being very antient. Good God! how was I ſurpriz'd, to find all things run counter to my expectations; to ſee the whole Family miſerably divided into Parties and Factions, where I look'd for a Brotherly Love, Charity and Union, not much inferior to that of the bleſſed Spirits in Heaven! How was I amazed, in the room of the moſt profound Humility and Self-Abnegation, to ſee the higheſt Ambition, Pride and Self-love to take place! That Temperance they ſo much boaſt of, I found oftentimes turn'd into ſhameful Exceſs and Gluttony; but this was done in private, to avoid giving Scandal. Theſe things I very much wonder'd at, but much more, when I was an Eye-witneſs to the General and other Superiors regaling of young Women in a cloſe Chappel of our Church, with Wine and other Dainties. Their Hoſpitality and Poverty were quite vaniſh'd, and nothing to be ſeen but an inſatiable Avarice and Thirſt after Riches. Their Obedience appear'd moſt in obeying their own unbridled Luſts and Paſſions. In a word, it ſeem'd to me, their chief ſtudy was, which of them ſhould be moſt wicked at home, and yet be thought the moſt holy abroad; that is to ſay, who ſhould moſt genteelly play the Hypocrite.

Such Practices as theſe, one would think, were ſufficient to have convinced me I had taken wrong meaſures for my Soul's Safety; and that it was at leaſt as eaſy to have work'd out my Salvation in *Sodom* or *Gomorrah*, as in a Cloy-

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ſter: but yet the great deſire I had of that Life, inclined me to believe, I might live up to the Rule and Conſtitutions of the Order (which in reality are very ſevere) tho others gave themſelves the liberty to break them.

This Thought had well-nigh perſuaded me to ſtay, when taking a Bible into my hands, I providentially caſt my Eyes on this Verſe, in the 9th Chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, and the 26th: *Ego igitur ſic curro, non quaſi in incertum: ſic pugno, non quaſi aërem verberans.* *I therefore ſo run, not as uncertainly: ſo fight I, not as one that beateth the Air.* This Scripture, after ſerious deliberation, back'd by that other in the firſt Chapter of *Iſaiah* and the 12th Verſe; *Quis hæc quæſivit de manibus veſtris?* *Who hath required theſe things at your hands?* occaſion'd various Doubts and Apprehenſions in my Mind, which ſuffer'd me to take little reſt day or night.

To be ſhort, after frequent Diſputes within my ſelf, for and againſt the Exerciſe of thoſe Mortifications and Auſterities the Rule enjoin'd, I began to conſider the Reaſonableneſs and Weight of our Saviour's Aſſertion: *When ye ſhall have done all thoſe things which are commanded you, ſay, We are unprofitable Servants.* Luke 17.10. And that of the Apoſtle, That *the Sufferings of this preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which ſhall be revealed in us.* Rom. 8. 18.

Being fully convinced, that the Romiſh Doctrine of Merits, and Works of Supererogation, was highly derogatory to the Honour of Chriſt; I could not excuſe that of Saints-Worſhip from the ſame Cenſure, when I was daily an

Eye-witneſs of their paying far greater Veneration to the Virgin *Mary* than they did to her Son, by pulling off their Hoods, kneeling, and lighting the Altar-Candles whilſt they ſung her Anthems, which it was not their Cuſtom to do at other parts of the Office.

Theſe and many other Diſcoveries being happily made, and my former Prejudice by degrees vaniſhing away, I began to examine all the reſt of their Doctrines, the greateſt part of which I found ſo extremely repugnant to God's Word, that I could not chuſe but be greatly aſtoniſh'd at my former Stupidity and Blindneſs, in not diſcerning that Sink of Errors, Superſtitions and Abominations I had wallow'd in.

Upon the whole, that I might prevent all danger of relapſing into any one of thoſe Corruptions for the future, I took up a firm Reſolution to ſhut my Ears againſt all Doctrines whatſoever that could not be plainly made good out of the Scriptures; and (all Motives of Intereſt laid aſide) to join in Communion with that Church, whoſe Opinions and Worſhip I ſhould find moſt conformable thereunto. In purſuance hereof I return'd to *England*, and was preſent at the Sermons not only of the Church-of-*England* Clergy, but alſo of Diſſenting Miniſters of different Perſuaſions; I ſeriouſly peruſed their Books, and particularly read over the Thirty nine Articles of the Church of *England*: and truly I ſhould have been very glad, had I found them ſo agreeable to Scripture in all Points, as that I might with Satisfaction have ſat down in that Communion;

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but I cannot aſſent to the 34*th*, 35*th* and 36*th* Articles, nor to thoſe words in the 20*th*, *viz.* "That the Church hath Power to decree "Rites and Ceremonies, and Authority in "Controverſies of Faith:" alſo part of the 27*th* touching Infant-Baptiſm, which are the ſame the Parliament was pleaſed to except in behalf of thoſe Chriſtians that are generally known by the Name of *Anabaptiſts*, into whoſe Communion I heartily deſire to be admitted, as thinking them to come neareſt, in their Doctrine and Worſhip, to the Holy Scriptures, which they profeſs to make the Rule of their Faith and Practice.

Having thus, Chriſtian Auditors, given you a moſt exact and impartial Account of the moſt remarkable Paſſages of my Life, and the manner of my Conviction; it remains that I now particularly renounce the Errors I formerly embraced in the Romiſh Church.

Mr.

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Mr. *PILKINGTON*'s RECANTATION.

I *John Pilkington*, being highly ſenſible of the Favour of Almighty God, in reſcuing me out of the Jaws of the Devil, and truly ſorrowful for all the Sins of my Life paſt, and particularly thoſe I immediately incurred, whilſt I adher'd to the Romiſh Communion; Do here, in the preſence of the All-ſeeing God, and Judg of all Men, moſt candidly and ſincerely acknowledg, that I am not only fully convinced of all the palpable Errors, Corruptions and Novelties of that Church, as well in Doctrine as Practice, but do alſo utterly diſown, renounce and abjure the ſame, with the greateſt abhorrence and deteſtation I am capable of.

And in particular, as to thoſe Doctrines that concern the Infallibility and Supremacy of the Biſhop or Church of *Rome*, the main Foundations on which all the other Abominations of the Papiſts are built: I utterly abjure them, as groſly intrenching on the Prerogatives of God.

Their Doctrine, That Salvation cannot be had out of their Communion, is ſo far from

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being countenanced in Scripture, that I'm perſuaded, it is moſt Uncharitable and Antichriſtian.

Moreover, I utterly abhor their impious and idolatrous Sacrifice of the Maſs; as alſo their Doctrines of Tranſubſtantiation, and Half-Communion: the ſame being not only contrary to the Word of God, but to the ſolid Principles of Reaſon.

Their equalling Unwritten Traditions to the Holy Scriptures, I'm aſſured, is highly blaſphemous, and as ſuch I abhor it.

I look upon their forbidding Eccleſiaſticks to marry, and the Laity to read the Scriptures, as alſo their multiplied Faſts and Abſtinences, under pain of Mortal Sin; their practice of Auricular Confeſſion, and their Vows of Chaſtity, Poverty and Obedience; as tyrannical, and deſtructive of true Goſpel-Liberty: and therefore do freely renounce and forſake them.

I likewiſe abjure their Doctrine touching Indulgences, Purgatory, Merits, Works of Supererogation, Prayers in an unknown Tongue, and the Seven Sacraments.

Laſtly, I renounce, as derogatory to the Honour of God, and Merits of the Lord Jeſus, their Adoration of the Croſs, Images and Relicks: as likewiſe their Invocation of the Bleſſed Virgin, Angels and Saints.

Theſe and all other Errors, Corruptions, Novelties and Superſtitions, taught and practiſed by the Church of *Rome*, beſides, or in oppoſition to the Purity of the Goſpel, I do from the bottom of my Soul diſown, renounce and abjure, and am reſolved, by the Grace of God, ſo to do to my Life's end.

And

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And now, to conclude all, I earneſtly deſire this pious Auditory, to pray for and with me, That the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus, who ſent his Beloved Son into the World to redeem and ſave Sinners, and to call them to Repentance, would vouchſafe to give me a Repentance never to be repented of, and ſuch powerful Aſſiſtances of his Holy Spirit, that I may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleaſing, and adorn the Doctrine of God my Saviour in all things, who has wrought this wonderful Change in my Soul. And I do here, in the preſence of God, his Holy Angels, and this Congregation, proteſt that I have done and ſaid all this, freely, without Equivocation or Mental Reſervation; and do ſolemnly promiſe and oblige my ſelf (in caſe I be admitted a Member of this Church) to continue in ſincere and conſtant Communion with the ſame, or others of the ſame Perſuaſion, God aſſiſting, as long as the Members thereof ſhall keep to the Purity of the Goſpel.

John Pilkington.

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The Reſt of the People of GOD.

A

Funeral Sermon

Occaſion'd by the

DEATH

Of the Reverend

Mr. *JOHN PIGGOTT*,

Late Miniſter of the Goſpel.

Preach'd *March* 29. 1713.

By JOSEPH STENNETT.

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HEBREWS IV. 9.

There remaineth therefore a Reſt to the People of God.

THIS to fulfil the Deſire of a Dying Friend, that I am now to diſcourſe on theſe Words. The Worthy Paſtor of this Congregation having ſome months before his Deceaſe made choice of this Paſſage, as a proper Subject for his Funeral Sermon, importun'd me to undertake this Service. He had then, it ſeems, *the Sentence of Death in himſelf*, and perceiv'd its gradual Approaches, when we were willing to hope it was at a much greater diſtance from him, than what Time has ſince made appear.

As it was the Buſineſs of his Life to conſult your Advantage, and to endeavour your Edification; ſo he was ſollicitous that his Death might be inſtructive to you too: for as the Apoſtle *Paul* ſays of *Timothy*, *He naturally cared for your State*, and your Welfare conſtantly engag'd his Thoughts in the time of his Sickneſs, as well as that of his Health; ſo that He might well have expreſs'd the Temper of his Phil. 2. 20.

Mind

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Mind toward you in the Terms of the Apoſtle
2 Pet. 1. 12—15. *Peter: I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of theſe things, tho you know them, and be eſtabliſh'd in the preſent Truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this Tabernacle, to ſtir you up, by putting you in remembrance. Knowing that ſhortly I muſt put off this my Tabernacle.——Moreover, I will endeavour that you may be able after my Deceaſe to have theſe things always in remembrance.*

When the Diſtemper under which he labour'd had ſo far weaken'd his Conſtitution, that he ſuppos'd his *Departure was at hand*, he was willing to have hazarded the Remains of that Life, the Vigor of which he had ſpent in your Service, to have obtain'd an opportunity of preaching to you one Sermon more, and would gladly have been brought from his *Bed of Languiſhing* to *the Houſe of Prayer*, to have giving you his dying Charge (if poſſible) from this Pulpit, whence you had ſo often heard him explain the Principles and enforce the Duties of our Holy Religion. But alas! tho his *Spirit was willing*, his *Fleſh was* then too *weak* for this Service. However, what he could not perform himſelf, he was willing ſhould in ſome ſort be done by another. And tho his Lips are now clos'd in the ſilent Grave, yet (like
Heb. 11. 4. *Abel*) *he being dead yet ſpeaks*; ſpeaks by the ſacred Doctrine he ſo often inculcated on your Minds in his Sermons and Exhortations, and by the holy Example he gave you, when converſant among you; ſpeaks by that Faith and Hope, that Patience and Meekneſs, that Humility and Reſignation, that Charity and Kindneſs, which appear'd both in the Conduct of his Life, and in his Behaviour on a dying Bed:

ſpeaks

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ſpeaks to let you know how excellent and neceſſary a thing true Religion is, to make you happy in Life and Health, in Sickneſs and at Death: ſpeaks by his own Sickneſs and Death, that *Righteous Men* (as well as others) *are taken away*, and *the Prophets do not live for ever*; and to put you all in mind *how frail you are*, that you may *ſo number your days as to apply your Hearts unto Wiſdom:* Speaks to you particularly by the Words of our Text, whereby he after themoſt ſolemn manner recommends to you, as a matter worthy of your utmoſt Care, that you would ſecure to you ſelves an *Entrance into that Reſt which remains to the People of God. Being dead* (I ſay) *he yet ſpeaks*; but which is infinitely more aweful, that GOD, whoſe *Word lives and abides for ever*, whoſe Word will be either *a Savor of Life unto Life, or a Savor of Death unto Death* to you, ſpeaks, and that after the moſt obliging and importunate manner, to invite you to *enter into this Reſt*, and to *take heed leſt any of you fall ſhort of it thro Unbelief.*

Iſa. 57. 1. Zech. 1. 5. Pſal. 39. 4. Pſal. 90. 12. 2 Cor. 2. 16. Heb. 3. 19. Ch. 4. 1.

The main Deſign of the Author of this Epiſtle, is to ſhew how much the Adminiſtration of the Goſpel is to be prefer'd to that of the Law. This he makes appear by many Arguments, the chief of which are taken from the Dignity of the Mediator of the New Teſtament, and from the Excellency and Perfection of his Sacrifice.

When he had given a glorious Idea of this Mediator in the firſt and ſecond Chapters, and had ſhewn in the beginning of the third, that he is as much ſuperior to *Moſes*, as a Son is to a Servant; at the ſeventh Verſe he takes occaſion to exhort the *Hebrews* to attend to the Doc-

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Doctrine of the Gospel, and to warn 'em of the Danger of an impious Contempt, and obstinate Refusal of the gracious Proposals it contains; which, as he shews, would certainly expose 'em to a much severer Sentence than that pronounc'd and executed on the *Israelites* for their Disobedience and Unbelief formerly in the Wilderness.

This Caution he thinks fit to give in the words of the Psalmist: *Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts, as in the Provocation, in the day of Temptation in the Wilderness; when your Fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my Works forty Years: Wherefore I was grieved with that Generation, and said, they do always err in their Hearts, and they have not known my ways; so I swore in my Wrath, they shall not enter into my Rest.*

Psal. 95. Heb. 3. 7---12.

To enforce this Admonition, he suggests that *David* in these words prophesy'd of the Time of the Gospel, when he says, *To day, if ye will hear his Voice*, &c. and that therefore 'tis reasonable to apply the Example he produces of the Punishment of the unbelieving Tribes, who provok'd God in the Desart, to those who should reject the Glad Tidings of the Gospel; to shew the Guilt and Danger of the latter above the former, and that with as much greater force, as the Light and Grace of the Gospel transcend whatever might seem most glorious in the Law. Therefore he insists, ver. 12. *Take heed, Brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is call'd to day, lest any of you be harden'd thro the Deceitfulness of Sin.* And again,——*With whom was he griev'd forty Years? Was it not with them*

Ver. 13. Ver. 17, 18, 19.

them that had ſinned, whoſe Carcaſes fell in the Wilderneſs? And to whom ſware he that they ſhould not enter into his Reſt, but to them that believ'd not? So we ſee that they could not enter in becauſe of Unbelief.

Immediately after he had repeated this ſad Inſtance of God's Judgment on rebellious *Iſrael*, he urges his former Caution, and adds in the beginning of the fourth Chapter; *Let us therefore fear, leſt a Promiſe being left us of entring into his Reſt, any of you ſhould ſeem to come ſhort of it; for unto us was the Goſpel preach'd as well as to them: but the Word preach'd did not profit them, not being mix'd with Faith in them that heard it. For we who have believ'd do enter into Reſt; as he ſaid, As I have ſworn in my Wrath, if they ſhall enter into my Reſt.* Chap. 4. Ver. 1, 2, 3.

And to make it evident that the Pſalmiſt, in mentioning the Oath of God againſt the *Iſraelites*, namely, *That they ſhould not enter into his Reſt*, inſinuates, that there is now alſo, in the time of the Goſpel, a Reſt propos'd to us, which Infidels ſhall be precluded, and into which thoſe who believe ſhall certainly enter; he conſiders the ſeveral kinds of Reſt in which God is pleas'd to claim a Property, which are therefore call'd *his Reſts*, and into which his People may be ſaid to enter, that ſo it may appear what Reſt that is which the Prophet *David* intimates in the forecited words.

He ſhews firſt that it could not be the Sabbath, that Day of Reſt that enſu'd the Creation, and in which it is ſaid, *God reſted from all his Works*; ſince this Reſt takes its Date from the Foundation of the World: whereas the Reſt

Reſt the Pſalmiſt means, is ſpoken of as yet
Ver. 3, 4, 5. to come.—*If they ſhall enter into my Reſt; altho the Works were finiſh'd from the Foundation of the World, for he ſpake in a certain Place of the ſeventh day on this wiſe: And God did reſt the ſeventh day from all his Works; and in this Place again, if they ſhall enter into my Reſt.* That is, they ſhall by no means enter into my Reſt, according to the Import of the Particle [*if*] which in the *Hebrew* Idiom implies a ſtrong Negation; and this is a Form of Speech eſpecially us'd in Swearing. Thus when *Moſes* puts the Tribes of *Iſrael* in mind of their Obſtinacy and Unbelief, he adds, that *God was wroth, and ſware, ſaying, Surely, there ſhall not one of theſe Men of this evil Generation ſee the Good Land*, &c. 'Tis in the Original, *If a Man among theſe Men ſhall ſee*, &c.

אִם־יִרְאֶה אִישׁ

He farther obſerves, that the Reſt, ſuggeſted by the Pſalmiſt, could not be the Land of *Canaan*, tho this was alſo call'd God's Reſt, becauſe *Iſrael* had been poſſeſs'd of it long before the time of *David*. *Again he limiteth*
Ver. 7, 8. *a certain day, ſaying, in* David, *To day after ſo long a time; as it is ſaid, To day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts: For if Jeſus* [i. e. *Joſhua*] *had given them Reſt, then would he not afterward have ſpoken of another day.*

The Sum of this Reaſoning amounts to this: The Royal Pſalmiſt, in warning Men to hear the Voice of God *To day*, and not to harden their Hearts againſt it as the *Iſraelites* formerly did, leſt they ſhould be puniſh'd like them; ſignifies, that by obeying this Call of God, in believing the Divine Word, they ſhall be admitted into God's Reſt; which can't here mean the Sabbath, or the Land of *Canaan*, tho each

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each of these is call'd his Rest; because Men enter'd into these long before the time of *David*, and therefore must be understood of a State of Rest propos'd by the Gospel, of which he prophesies: So that the Author of this Epistle justly concludes in the words of our Text, *There remaineth therefore a Rest to the People of God.*

The Method I shall take in treating these Words, will be;

I. To give you a General Idea of them, by a brief Explication.
II. To insist more particularly on the Principal Things contain'd in them.

I. I am to give a General View of the Text, by explaining the Terms of it: And am to shew,

1. What is signify'd by this *Rest*.
2. Who are design'd by this Character, [The People of God.]
3. What is meant by the *remaining* of this Rest to them.

1. As to the *Rest* here spoken of, 'tis evident it signifies the State of Happiness which the Righteous shall enjoy in the World to come: and this Term (like that of Peace) is us'd in the Holy Scripture in a very extensive Sense; and sometimes signifies,

(1.) That Ease and Repose which ensues a Cessation of Toil and Labour; for these were first introduc'd by Sin, and therefore 'tis a part of the Curse pronounc'd on fallen Man, that *in Sorrow* he should *eat of the* [Fruits of the] *Ground all the days of his Life*; and that *in the Sweat of his Face*, he should *eat* [his] Gen. 3. 17, v. 19.

Bread. And that Labour and Sorrow, that Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, of which the Wiſe-Man ſo often complains in the Book of *Eccleſiaſtes*, may well be taken for a Comment on this righteous Sentence. The Miſery of Men, on this account, appear'd to him ſo great, as to make him prefer the State of the *Dead* to that of the *Living*; and *the day of Death to the day of one's Birth.* Indeed to be deliver'd from theſe Evils, is no inconſiderable Advantage: Tho we are not to imagine, that the Reſt ſpoken of in our Text only regards that of the Body in the Grave; however, this is taken notice of in Scripture as a Benefit. When *Job* deſcribes the Eaſe and Quiet of the Grave, he elegantly ſays, *There the Wicked ceaſe from troubling, and there the Weary are at reſt: There the Priſoners reſt together, they hear not the Voice of the Oppreſſor: The Small and Great are there, and the Servant is free from his Maſter.* And the Prophet *Iſaiah*, ſpeaking of the Death of the righteous Man, ſays, *He ſhall enter into Peace; they ſhall reſt in their Beds, each one walking in his Uprightneſs.* An Angel ſpeaks to the ſame purpoſe to the Prophet *Daniel*, *Go thou thy way, till the End be; for thou ſhalt reſt, and ſtand in thy Lot at the End of Days.* And after the like manner the Apoſtle *John* is inſtructed by a Voice from Heaven, ſaying, *Write, Bleſſed are the Dead who die in the LORD, from henceforth; yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their Labours, and their Works follow them.*

Eccl. 4. 2. Ch. 7. 1.

Job 3. 17, 18, 19.

Iſa. 57. 2.

Dan. 12. 13.

Rev. 14. 13.

But the Reſt in the Text may be ſuppos'd, eſpecially to regard that of the Souls of good Men, when ſeparated from their Bodies; for while they are *abſent from the Body*, they

2 Cor. 5. 8.

will

will be *present with the Lord*, when they shall be free from all the Fatigue and Care that attend them in this Life. Above all, it may denote that perfect State of Rest that will follow the Resurrection of the Just, whose Bodies and Souls, when reunited, shall participate the same Blessing, and enjoy an everlasting Immunity from all Toil, Labour and Uneasiness.

This Sense of the Word is confirm'd, by the Allusion which the Author of this Epistle makes in the Context both to the Condition of the *Israelites*, who were deliver'd from a State of Slavery and Bondage, which they had long undergone in *Egypt*, and were promis'd a State of Liberty and Ease in the Land of *Canaan*; and also to the Rest of the Sabbath, in which God is said to have rested from all his Works, and which was design'd to give Men Rest from their ordinary Toil and Labour: and therefore the Words we are considering, run thus in the Original, *There remains therefore a Sabbatism for the People of God*, i. e. a Cessation from all Toil and Labour.

(2.) This Rest signifies a State of Settlement and Security, in opposition to the various Changes and Vicissitudes, the Hazards and Dangers that attend good Men in this Life. Thus when God promises the People of *Israel*, that *his Presence should go with them*, and that *he would give them Rest*; 'tis plain, he hereby lets them know, that whereas they were now wandering in the Desart, he would bring them to a settled State, and that he would at length secure them from the Inconveniences and Dangers which attended them during their Pilgrimage. And when this People were freed from the Calamity of War, 'tis said their Exod. 33. 14.

Josh. 14. 15. Judg. 5. 31. *Land had Rest from War.* On the same account 'tis said of *David*, that *the* LORD *gave* 2 Sam. 7. 1. 1 Chron. 22. 9. *him Rest from all his Enemies round about:* And it was propheſy'd of *Solomon*, that he ſhould be *a Man of Reſt*; that is, that he ſhould have a peaceful Reign. To the like purpoſe the *Jews* Eſth. 9. 16. are ſaid to have *had Reſt from their Enemies*, after the Defeat of *Haman*'s Plot, to ſignify the Tranquillity and Safety they enjoy'd on that occaſion.

This well agrees with the Reference made in the Context to what was promis'd the *Iſraelites*; namely, that after all the Journeys and Toils of the Wilderneſs for forty years, and all the Wars that ſhould attend them at their Entrance of the promis'd Land, they ſhould at length attain a State of Settlement and Security. Thus good Men, tho in a State of Pilgrimage and Warfare, during their Abode in this World, ſhall at laſt arrive at Heaven, where there is perfect Safety and Tranquillity: Tho all things here are fluctuating and ſubject to change, that State of Glory is conſtant and permanent.

And as the Tribes of *Iſrael* were promis'd the Divine Protection, ſo long as they were ſtedfaſt in God's Covenant; ſo that they ſhould have no occaſion to fear any Invaſion from their Enemies, nay that theſe ſhould not ſo much as deſire their Land, when all the Men were withdrawn from their Frontiers, which happen'd thrice a year, when they were oblig'd to go up to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip: So this might adumbrate that perfect Security and uninterrupted Tranquillity the Righteous ſhall enjoy in the Heavenly State.

(3.) This

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(3.) This Term frequently ſignifies Joy and Pleaſure, and is oppos'd to a State of Grief and Pain; as appears by the account the Apoſtle *Paul* gives of the future Judgment, when he ſays to the *Theſſalonians*,——*It is a righteous thing with God to recompenſe Tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you, who are troubled, REST with us, when the LORD Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his Mighty Angels*, &c. And when the Apoſtle *John* deſcribes the Miſery of thoſe who ſhall be condemn'd to Eternal Torments, he ſays, *They have no Reſt, Day nor Night.* 2 Theſſ. 1. 6, 7. Rev. 14. 11.

The People of *Iſrael* were promis'd *Reſt*, in this ſenſe, in the Land of *Canaan*, in caſe they were obedient to the Divine Laws. They were not only to be protected from Calamities and Dangers, ſo that none ſhould make them afraid; *but to ſit down under their Vines and Fig-Trees*, to enjoy Health and long Life, Peace and Plenty; in ſhort, the Confluence of all Temporal Bleſſings, that might give them innocent Pleaſure and Joy; or to uſe the Apoſtle's words on a like occaſion, *To fill their Hearts with Food and Gladneſs.* Zech. 3. 10. Deut. 28. 2——14. Acts 14. 17.

Laſtly, *Reſt* is often taken for Complacency, Content and Satisfaction. Thus 'tis ſaid, on the occaſion of *Noah*'s Sacrifices,—*The LORD ſmell'd a ſweet Savour*, or as it is in the Original, *a Savour of Reſt*; to ſhew his Offerings were very acceptable to God. And this Phraſe is elſewhere us'd, to ſhew God's Complacency in the Oblations that were preſented him, according to his own Inſtitution. And when the Pſalmiſt would calm the Troubles of his Mind, he thus expreſſes himſelf, *Return to thy Reſt, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully* Gen. 8. 21. Numb. 28. 2. Pſal. 116. 7.

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fully with thee. As if he had ſaid, Return, O my Soul, to thy uſual Refuge, to that Content and Satisfaction thou wert wont to enjoy in reſigning thy ſelf to the Divine Conduct, and in reflecting on God's paſt Favours. Again, *Reſt in the LORD, and wait patiently for him,* ſays he; that is, reſt ſatisfy'd with his wiſe Diſpoſal of all Events. And when the Prophet *Zephaniah* would ſhew how great Complacency God takes in his People, he ſays, *The LORD thy God in the midſt of thee is mighty, he will rejoice over thee with Joy, he will REST in his Love, he will joy over thee with Singing.*

Pſal. 37. 7.

Zeph. 3. 17.

Thus we have a General Idea of this Reſt, which not only ſignifies a Ceſſation from Toil and Labour, but a State of Settlement and Security, and of Joy and Pleaſure, nay, that Fulneſs of Joy which Complacency and Satisfaction denote; ſo that 'tis a Term very fit to repreſent the Happineſs of the Heavenly State.

2. We are now to conſider who are the Perſons that ſhall attain this Reſt, deſign'd by this Character, [The People of God.]

'Tis well known that this Title was, in antient times, given the Tribes of *Iſrael*; and 'tis to be obſerv'd that the Author of this Epiſtle conſtantly alludes to ſuch Things, and uſes ſuch Terms as that Nation was perfectly well acquainted with. They were call'd the *People of God*, becauſe they were ſelected from the reſt of Mankind to be, after a very particular manner, inſtructed in the Knowledg of the Divine Will, and were taken into Covenant with God. They were form'd into a Political State, of which God himſelf was the King,

Deut. 4. 31---35.

King, who gave them Laws both Eccleſiaſtical and Civil; and by a long Series of Miracles deliver'd and protected them from their Enemies, ſo long as they remain'd ſtedfaſt in his Covenant. On this account they were call'd, *A Choſen Generation, a Royal Prieſthood, a Holy Nation, a Peculiar People.* Exod. 19. 5, 6. 1 Pet. 2. 9.

Indeed they *were not all* Iſrael *who were of Iſrael*, nor all *the Seed of* Abraham, in the ſenſe of the Goſpel, who deſcended from him *according to the Fleſh*; yet were they Typical Repreſentatives of that *Holy Nation*, that *Kingdom of Prieſts*, that *Peculiar People*, which God determin'd to collect for himſelf out of a degenerate World, during the State of the Goſpel: which wonderfully alter'd the face of Religion, and brought in a lively Hope and a new account of Things, refining and raiſing the Minds of Men from carnal and earthly, to ſpiritual and heavenly Objects. Under this pure Diſpenſation, they only are counted *Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to the Promiſe*, who imitate the *Father of the Faithful* in believing the Word of God, and prove themſelves to be his Children by imitating his Example: They are reckon'd *Iſraelites* indeed, *in whom there is no Guile; who are born not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Fleſh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God*; who are regenerated by the Efficacy of the Holy Spirit. Theſe are the People of God, in the ſenſe of our Text, who truly believe in the name of our LORD Jeſus Chriſt, and embrace his Goſpel. And 'tis to theſe that this *Reſt*, or State of Happineſs, *remains*; 'tis only they who *believe*, that *enter into this Reſt*. On the contrary, *without Faith 'tis impoſſible to pleaſe God*: And as the Infidelity

Rom. 9. 6, 7, 8. Gal. 3. 29. John 1. 13. John 3. 5---8. Heb. 4. 3. Heb. 11. 6.

fidelity of the *Iſraelites* hinder'd them from entring into *Canaan*, ſo thoſe who disbelieve and reject the Goſpel of Chriſt, will, without Repentance, fall ſhort of Eternal Felicity, and be expos'd to the Sentence of Eternal Death and Miſery.

3. The laſt thing to be explain'd, is the *Remaining* of this Reſt: *There remaineth a Reſt to the People of God.* And this may import,

(1.) That this State of Happineſs is not to be expected in this preſent World. This is a State of Pilgrimage, where good Men find no reſt for the Soles of their Feet: *I am* Pſal. 39. 12. *a Stranger with thee* (ſays the Pſalmiſt) *and a Sojourner, as all my Fathers were.* And the Author of this Epiſtle, ſpeaking of the Patri- Heb. 11. 13, archs, ſays, *They confeſs'd that they were Stran-* 14, 15, 16. *gers and Pilgrims on Earth*; and adds, that *They who ſay ſuch things, declare plainly that they ſeek a Country, and that they deſire a better Country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not aſham'd to be call'd their God, for he hath prepar'd for them a City.* This is not their Reſt, but there remains a Reſt for them in the future State.

(2.) It may alſo denote the Certainty of their Enjoyment of this Happineſs; 'tis future, but 'tis real; the Manſions of Bliſs are prepar'd for them. The Glory they *hope* for, Col. 1. 5. *the Crown of Righteouſneſs* they expect, is ſaid 2 Tim. 4. 8. *to be laid up for them in Heaven.*

(3.) It may ſignify the Duration of it. 'Tis not like the Pleaſures of this World, which are momentany and fleeting, and which may be compar'd to the *crackling of Thorns under a Pot*, as the Wiſe-Man elegantly repreſents

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preſents the *Laughter of a Fool*; for after a little Noiſe and ſhort Blaze, theſe trifling Joys vaniſh and come to nothing, but often leave Bitterneſs and Remorſe behind them. The things of this World periſh in *the uſing*, and the *Faſhion of it* continually *paſſes away*; but the Saints have *in Heaven a better and an enduring Subſtance*. Their Crowns of Glory never fade, their Reſt is not interrupted there, but *remains* to Eternity. Eccl. 7. 6. Col. 2. 22. 1 Cor. 7. 21. Heb. 1. 34.

Having explain'd the Terms of the Text, I am now,

II. More particularly to diſcourſe on the principal things contain'd in it; and ſhall treat,

1. Of the Excellency of that future State of Happineſs deſcrib'd here by Reſt.

2. Of the Character of the Perſons who ſhall enjoy it, *viz.* the People of God.

3. Of the Certainty of this State.

1. The Excellency of this State of Happineſs, repreſented by Reſt, deſerves our particular Conſideration.

We all naturally and neceſſarily deſire to be happy, and to be as happy as 'tis poſſible for us to be: And what can we deſire more (as large and as importunate as our Deſires are) than to be entirely free from Labour and Toil, Danger and Diſappointment, Pain and Sorrow, Anxiety and Diſcontent; and to enjoy conſtant Eaſe and Repoſe, undiſturb'd Safety, exquiſite Joy and perfect Satisfaction? Yet no leſs Happineſs than this is ſignify'd by that *Reſt which remains to the People of God*, as you have heard before. 'Tis ſuch indeed as *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither have enter'd*

1 Cor. 2. 9. *enter'd into the Heart of Man, the things which God hath prepar'd for them that love him.* 'Tis a conſiderable Advantage to be deliver'd from all the Toil and Vexation, Cares and Troubles, Fears and Hazards, that attend us in Rev. 21. 4. our preſent State; to have *Tears wiped from all Eyes*, when there ſhall be *no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying, neither ſhall there be any more Pain.* But 'tis a much higher degree of Happineſs, to have the Capacity of the Soul enlarg'd and refin'd, to receive and reliſh heavenly Joys, and then to have its Deſires en- Eph. 3. 19. tirely ſatisfy'd, and *fill'd with all the Fulneſs of God.* Safety and Tranquillity would make a moderate degree of the Accommodations of this Life very comfortable: but what words can expreſs the Excellency of that State and Place, where the higheſt Pleaſure is join'd with the utmoſt Security, and where there's not the leaſt Fear of loſing that Divine Favour, which gives the Soul the greateſt Con- Pſal. 16. 11. tent and Satisfaction; where there is *Fulneſs of Joy, and Pleaſures for evermore?*

The many bright Images and elegant Figures, us'd in the Holy Scripture to deſcribe this bleſſed State, fall infinitely ſhort of its real Glory: But as the Objects of Senſe eaſily and ſtrongly affect us, the Word of God repreſents the Celeſtial Glory by every thing that Men chiefly admire and eſteem in this World; that by ſtriking their Imaginations, their Attention may be engag'd to conſider the real Excellency of that Happineſs, and how to ſecure to themſelves the Enjoyment of it.

What a magnificent Deſcription is given Chap. 21. & 22. us of the *New Jeruſalem* by the Apoſtle *John* in

in his *Revelation!* What *glorious things are ſpoken of the City of God!* The Walls are great and high, the Building regular and noble; the Materials of the Wall are Jaſper, and the Streets of the City pure Gold, like tranſparent Glaſs; the Foundations garniſh'd with all manner of precious Stones, the twelve Gates twelve entire Pearls; 'tis adorn'd with the Throne of God, and favour'd with the continual Preſence of his Glory, and that of our bleſſed Saviour, which illuminate this Holy City. A River of Water of Life, clear Cryſtal, proceeding out of the Throne of God, and of the Lamb, flows thro the midſt of it; on the Banks of which grows the Tree of Life, bearing great variety of Fruits every Month, and Leaves that have a healing Virtue.

The Inhabitants are dignify'd with the Titles of *Kings and Prieſts*, who ſhall live and reign for ever. The Crowns that are given them, the Robes they wear, and the Palms they carry in their Hands, the Places aſſign'd them on the Throne of Chriſt, to ſit with him, as he ſits on his Father's Throne, give us an Idea of the higheſt Glory to which Creatures can be advanc'd: and their being fed with the Fruits of the Tree of Life in the Paradiſe of God, and with the hidden *Manna*, and led by the LAMB to Living Fountains of Water, and many like Expreſſions, ſhew the exquiſite Pleaſure that ſhall attend their being *ever with the LORD.* Chap. 7. 17.

It's reaſonable to believe, that the Favours to be beſtow'd in the heavenly State on thoſe whom the King of Kings ſhall delight to honour, will be ſutable to the Greatneſs both of

of his Power and of his Love; and that thoſe to whom he diſdains not at preſent to give the endearing Titles of his Children and his Friends, ſhall ſhare thoſe Honours and Delights, which are agreeable to the Dignity of ſuch a Relation.

It may be alſo juſtly concluded, that a Felicity purchas'd for them at ſo vaſt a Price as that of the Blood of the Son of God, muſt bear ſome proportion to the Merit of this wonderful Sacrifice; and that the Effects of that Divine *Love, which paſſes Knowledg*, will appear as well in the Greatneſs of the Bliſs our Saviour has procur'd for them, as in the Greatneſs of the Sufferings he endur'd to accompliſh that glorious Deſign.

'Twas with this View, when he was ready to lay down his Life, that he pray'd ſo earneſtly to his Father, that his Diſciples might be with him in that State of Glory to which he was to be advanc'd, as a Reward of his Sufferings, that they might behold his Glory, and partake of it: and 'twas to encourage them to believe and aſpire after ſo great a Privilege, he aſſures them of his Aſcenſion, to take poſſeſſion of Heaven as their Forerunner, and to provide Manſions of Glory for them.

But I confeſs this is a very general Account of a Matter, that well deſerves to be more particularly diſcuſs'd: I ſhall therefore conſider this State of Happineſs, with reference to the Faculties and Capacities of the Subjects of it.

(1.) If we conſider Man as an intelligent Being, we can't ſuppoſe him capable of Happineſs, without the Gratification of his rational

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nal Powers. As his Perception, Reaſon and Judgment are Faculties, which ſhew the high Rank he has among the various Orders of Creatures, 'tis not to be conceiv'd that he can be truly happy, unleſs theſe be agreeably entertain'd with proper Objects, and ſecur'd from Errors and Miſtakes. Mankind is ſo ſenſible of this, that thoſe who have allow'd themſelves the moſt time to think, and reflect on the Dignity and Capacity of their Being, have expreſs'd the moſt importunate deſire after Knowledg and Wiſdom; being convinc'd that a rational Creature could not be happy without theſe. And when the Wiſe-Man, in the Book of *Proverbs*, ſo elegantly deſcribes the Happineſs of thoſe who apply themſelves to acquire Knowledg and Underſtanding; as he ſhews thereby the Excellency of Religion, which is founded on Principles of Eternal Truth and Prudence; ſo he proceeds on the Suppoſition, that 'tis impoſſible to be happy in a State of Error and Folly.

How many Great Minds have undergone a multitude of Inconveniences and Diſadvantages, rather than they would want the Satisfaction of improving their intellectual Talents; and have with extraordinary Vigour and Application purſu'd ſuch Studies, as others have accounted more dry than profitable! which however ſhews, that the Knowledg even of things leſs important is deſirable; how much more the Knowledg of Truths of the higheſt Nature and Conſequence?

And if, notwithſtanding the ſmall Advance the greateſt Genius can make in the Knowledg of Truth in this World, becauſe of the

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ſhortneſs of human Life; yet that degree of it that is attainable, has Charms enough to encourage great Attention and Induſtry, and to make the Inquirers after Truth eaſily overcome the Fatigue of cloſe Study, and deſpiſe many temporal Inconveniences that attend it, ſo as ſometimes to forget the Neceſſities of their frail Bodies: What Pleaſure muſt the Soul find in Knowledg infinitely more extenſive and important, and attain'd without Labour and Toil, ſuch as the Saints ſhall enjoy in Heaven!

The great diſtinction we make between Men in our Eſteem, with reſpect to the different Meaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledg we imagine they poſſeſs, ſhews that Mankind are agreed that theſe greatly ennoble our Nature, and have a proper Tendency to make us happy. How great then muſt be the Felicity, how great the Glory of the future World, where the Righteous ſhall have thoſe Divine Truths, which are of the higheſt Importance, clearly ſet before them; and their Minds inlarg'd to perceive them diſtinctly, and without difficulty apply'd to the Contemplation of them! With what Joy and Admiration will they be fill'd, when they *know as they are known*, and ſee not, *as in a Glaſs, darkly* or obſcurely, but clearly, *and Face to Face.*

1 Cor. 13. 12.

Here we are at great Uncertainties; ſometimes groping entirely in the Dark, and at beſt enjoying but ſome little Glimmerings of Light: How great will the Joy of the Soul be, when ſhe comes to ſee Truth in its native Beauty, and is deliver'd both from the Fear of miſtaking, and from the Uneaſineſs of doubting!

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Some Perſons are very imprudent in the choice they make of purſuing ſuch Parts of Knowledg as are leſs valuable, and yet find no inconſiderable Pleaſure in ſuch Purſuits: How entertaining then muſt the intimate Knowledg of God, of his Nature, his Decrees, his Works and Laws, be to Souls qualify'd for the Intuition of theſe things, which are capable of engaging the Attention, and ſatisfying the Deſires of Myriads of Angels and Men to Eternity!

Our Ignorance, our Proneneſs to give into Miſtakes, our various Prejudices, and our Impatience in the reſearch of Truth, often prompt us to embrace its Shadow and Appearance, inſtead of the Subſtance and Reality: But the Heavenly Perfection will remove from our Souls every falſe Biaſs, and entirely free us from all Prepoſſeſſion and Illuſion. There will be no want of Time for the Inveſtigation of Truth, where Eternity will be ſpent in that happy Imployment; and this without any of thoſe Avocations, which, by reaſon of the Infirmities of our Nature, or the Neceſſities of our Fellow-Creatures, ſo often give us Interruption.

What a Tranſport of Joy has the Solution of a difficult Queſtion given a Philoſopher, who has before often made it the Subject of his Meditation without Succeſs! And will not the Souls of the Righteous be ſurpriz'd with infinite Pleaſure in ſucceeding conſtantly in the Diſcovery of thoſe Truths, that were formerly involv'd in Obſcurity and Darkneſs; ſo as to baffle the moſt penetrating Minds, and to confound the Wiſe and Prudent?

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If Men could attain much greater Degrees of Knowledg, than 'tis poſſible for them to do in this World, and could be ſure of eſcaping thoſe evil Occurrences, which ſo often cut them off in the Bloom of Youth, or in the full Vigour of their Days; yet Old Age ſoon overtakes them, and makes a wonderful Impreſſion on the Mind as well as on the Body: So that 'tis no uncommon thing to ſee the Faculties of the Soul, that were once ſtrong and lively, become very weak and languid; and what was acquir'd with much Diligence and Labour, is in a great meaſure loſt during this Life; ſo that many a Man may be ſaid to ſurvive his Learning, and even outlive his Reaſon. But no ſuch Declenſion will attend the Knowledg of the Bleſſed. None of the bright Ideas they have receiv'd ſhall be blotted from their Minds, but their Underſtandings eternally improve by the Divine Truths that ſhall be continually expos'd to their View, when they *ſhall be like God, and ſee him as he is.*

1 John 3. 2.

(2.) Let us farther conſider Man as a free Agent, and capable of Morality; and we ſhall find, that to make him truly and perfectly bleſſed, he muſt have a Happineſs ſuted to this part of his Character, which indeed dignifies him more than all other Advantages. The Holineſs, Juſtice, Goodneſs, Mercy and Truth of God, which are term'd his moral Perfections, give us the moſt glorious Idea of him: and ſince a Creature is by ſo much the more excellent, by how much the more nearly it reſembles the Creator; and ſince Men can reſemble the Great God in nothing ſo much, as in theſe moral Properties, in being *holy as*

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he is holy, and *merciful as he is merciful*; the Felicity of the Saints in Heaven must chiefly consist in moral Perfection. It is especially, on this account, that Man is said to have been created *in the Image of GOD*; it was Sin that defac'd this glorious Likeness, and 'tis the design of Religion to renew it on the Soul, in order to render it happy for ever. 1 Pet. 1. 16. Luke 6. 36.

'Tis indeed impossible to be happy without it; not only because God has, by an irreversible Sentence, determin'd, that *without Holiness no Man shall see him*; but because, in the nature of the thing, 'tis necessary, that the Powers of the Soul be turn'd and apply'd to their proper Objects, to render her compleatly happy. An unnatural Situation of the Mind will be attended with Uneasiness, which will frequently recur, notwithstanding all the Amusements Men can possibly invent to divert or allay it. And Creatures, capable of moral Agency, could not be happy, supposing they could be transported into Heaven, while their Souls are viciously inclin'd: For how could those, who are destitute of the Love of God, find pleasure in the View of his Perfections, the Beauty of whose Holiness would constantly reproach them for the Deformity of their Sin; and the Severity of whose Justice would strike such Terror on their guilty Minds, as would soon convince them, they could no more subsist in his Presence, than dry Stubble can dwell with devouring Fire? Since the Happiness of rational Creatures (as was just now observ'd) chiefly consists in their Likeness to their Creator, and in their Communion with him; where there is no Resemblance, but contrary Inclinations, what Communion can there be? *What Commu-* Heb. 12. 14.

2 Cor. 6. 14, 15. *nion hath Light with Darkneſs? And what Concord hath Chriſt with* Belial? And for the ſame reaſon, the Company of Saints and Angels would render the Wicked very uneaſy, if they were join'd to that bleſſed Society; in which they could find nothing to ſooth and flatter their fooliſh Prejudices and corrupt Appetites, but ſuch Sentiments and Diſpoſitions as would directly oppoſe and contradict them, nay cenſure and condemn them.

The Bliſs of Heaven is deſcrib'd by a State Iſa. 57. 20, 21. of Reſt and Tranquillity; while *the Wicked are like the raging Sea, when it cannot reſt, whoſe Waters caſt up Mire and Dirt*, as the Prophet ſpeaks; and then ſolemnly repeats the ſame thing in other Terms, *There is no Peace, ſaith my GOD, to the Wicked.* Their Souls are agitated with furious Storms, and they are ſo violently driven by impetuous Appetites, and ſo diſtracted with the Tumult of their contending Paſſions, that if they ſeek Reſt, 'tis impoſſible they ſhould find it, while they are poſſeſs'd with ſuch a Legion of evil Spirits.

But as good Men aſpire after nothing ſo much as a moral Reſemblance of the Divine Being, and as nothing makes them ſo uneaſy in this World as the want of Conformity to their 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2, &c. Maker's Will, which often makes them *groan*, and *deſire to be diſſolv'd*, that they may put off the Body of Sin, and be diveſted of their earthly Tabernacle together; and makes each of them cry out in the Language of the Pſal- Pſal. 55. 6. miſt, *O that I had Wings like a Dove! for then would I flee away, and be at reſt:* So this View of the future Glory, as a State of Immunity from all Sin, and of a compleat Conformity to the Will of God, is, in their account, the

moſt

moſt glorious and agreeable that can be given. As no Burden is ſo great to them as that of their Sins, and no Sorrow ſo pungent as that which is occaſion'd by the conſideration of their Folly and Deformity; ſo nothing ſo effectually revives their drooping Minds, and inſpires them with ſo lively a Joy, and ſo raviſhing a Pleaſure, as the Hope of their Arrival at a State of perfect Holineſs, which they know is the higheſt Glory of Creatures, and therefore will give them the greateſt Joy and Satisfaction.

(3.) As Man is a Creature capable of various Appetites and Affections, his Happineſs muſt be conſider'd with reference to theſe, and muſt exclude thoſe of them, which either ſuppoſe, or are the occaſion of Imperfection, Miſery and Uneaſineſs; and fix the reſt on their proper Objects, giving them a ſutable Intenſeneſs, and a conſtant Pleaſure, and that Satisfaction, which gives reſt to the Soul.

Thus the Appetites of Hunger and Thirſt will have no room in that bleſſed State, where the Bodies of the Saints ſhall not need thoſe Reparations by Food and Drink, which their preſent Infirmities require. All Fear ſhall be excluded, where there ſhall be no poſſibility of Danger, and where there ſhall be *perfect Love*, which the Apoſtle ſays, *caſts out Fear*. There will be no room for Anger, where there will be nothing to provoke and irritate, or give the leaſt Uneaſineſs; no Sorrow, where there ſhall be no mournful Scenes to excite that Paſſion, and Hope it ſelf ſhall be render'd uſeleſs by the Enjoyment of a compleat Felicity. There all Deſires will be regular, and theſe will find their true and full Satisfaction; Love

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will be constantly and intensely imploy'd in the View of Objects infinitely lovely, and unspeakable Joy result from the Fruition of substantial and eternal Good.

(4.) This Happiness will be accommodated to Mankind, as conscious of their own Thoughts and Actions. Now to render Creatures of such a Constitution happy, the Reflections they make upon their own Powers and Faculties, their Thoughts and Sensations, their Words and Actions, must give them no Trouble or Anxiety; but, on the contrary, great Delight and Contentment.

The Consciousness of the Dignity of our Nature, of the excellent Faculties, Talents and Endowments God has been pleas'd to give us, and the Abuse of these by what passes in our Minds, and in our Lives, by the Vanity of our Imaginations, the Temerity and Partiality of our Judgments, and the Irregularity of both our Passions and Actions, give us frequently a very just occasion of Shame and Remorse: Whereas the Reflections we make on the right use of the Powers God has given us, and on those Thoughts, Desires, Inclinations and Actions, which we have regulated by his Will, give us considerable Pleasure and Satisfaction in this World, tho attended with many Infirmities and Imperfections. How happy then must the Righteous be in the heavenly State, when their Minds shall be agreeably entertain'd with Reflections on the Powers and Faculties God has given them, when rais'd to the utmost pitch of Perfection of which they are capable! When they shall see the brightest Traces of the Divine Image on their own Hearts; when they shall feel no Reluctancy to the performance of

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of their Duties, but attend them with Delight and Pleaſure; when they ſhall be conſcious of no vain Fancy or irregular Deſire, much leſs of any diſorderly Action; but find themſelves continually in ſuch a Condition, as infinite Wiſdom and Holineſs approve, always anſwering the End of their Being, always acting according to the Obligations that are upon them, and always finding the higheſt Pleaſure and Satisfaction in ſo doing!

As we naturally and neceſſarily love our ſelves, it can't but give us extraordinary Pleaſure to find all the Springs and Movements of our Souls in order; ſince this is what makes them truly lovely, and renders them the Objects of the Complacency of God, whoſe *Favour is Life*, and in whoſe *Preſence there is Fulneſs of Joy.*

(5.) If we moreover take a View of Man, as a Creature compounded of two different kinds of Being, *viz.* a Soul and Body; we ſhall find this State of Reſt and Happineſs, aſſign'd to the Righteous, is adapted to both Parts of him. How happy the Souls of good Men ſhall be, has in part been ſhewn already; but they will not attain perfect Bliſs, till the happy Day of the Reſurrection, when their Bodies too ſhall participate the heavenly Glory.

The Body indeed is the leſs noble Part of Man; yet the Holy Scripture aſſures us, that the Bodies of the Saints ſhall be rais'd from the Duſt, and cloth'd with Beauty and Immortality; that our bleſſed Saviour *will change our vile Body, that it may be faſhion'd like to his Glorious Body, according to the Working, whereby he is able even to ſubdue all things to himſelf:* That Phil. 3. 21.

1 Cor. 15. 42, 43, 44. tho the Bodies of the Saints are *ſown in Corruption*, they ſhall *be rais'd in Incorruption*; tho *ſown in Diſhonour*, they ſhall *be rais'd in Glory*; tho *ſown in Weakneſs*, they ſhall *be rais'd in Power*; and that which is *ſown a natural Body*, rais'd *a ſpiritual One*.

How glorious did the Body of our Saviour appear, when transfigur'd, and when he ſhew'd himſelf to the Apoſtle *John!* If the Bodies of the Saints are to be faſhion'd after this glorious Model, we may be ſure the Matter of them will be greatly purg'd and refin'd, and the Form of them will be very beautiful and glorious. When this *Mortal ſhall have put on Immortality*, and *Death ſhall be ſwallow'd up in Victory*, thoſe Bodies that ſhall be form'd for Eternity, and to be the Vehicles of ſuch happy Souls, will be every way fitted and qualify'd for ſuch an Office, and for ſuch a Duration.

Rev. 1. 13, 14, &c.

(6.) As Man is a ſociable Creature, he ought to have agreeable Society, as well as other Advantages, to render him compleatly happy: For whatever Privileges ſome melancholy and ſuperſtitious Fancies have affix'd to perpetual Solitude and Retirement, we have reaſon to believe the Author of our Being, who ſoon after the Formation of the firſt Man, declar'd it was *not good that he ſhould be alone*. And that this Declaration may be extended farther than Conjugal Society, will appear from the Faculties beſtow'd on Mankind, which render them capable of doing much Service to each other; nay, both of contributing to, and partaking of various Benefits only to be enjoy'd in a Community.

Gen. 2. 18.

The Power of communicating Ideas, eſpecially by the Faculty of Speech; the Capacity of

of being affected with each others Circumſtances, and touch'd with each others Paſſions; ſufficiently make appear, that Men were, in their Original Conſtitution, deſign'd for Society.

'Tis true, the Saints above in Glory ſtand not in need of divers of thoſe Aſſiſtances and Supports, which make Society ſo very neceſſary to us here below; yet this does not hinder but, even in their bleſſed State, the Company of their Fellow-Creatures, both of the ſame and of a ſuperior Order, may contribute to the Advancement of their Glory and Bliſs; as this will give occaſion both to the Exerciſe of their Vertues, the Improvement of their Knowledg, and the Communication of their Joys. Therefore the Author of this Epiſtle deſcribes the Celeſtial State, in Terms that give us the Idea of a moſt glorious and happy Society: *Ye are come* (ſays he) *to Mount* Sion, *and to the City of the Living G O D, the heavenly* Jeruſalem, *and to an innumerable Company of Angels; To the General Aſſembly, and Church of the Firſt-born, who are written in Heaven, and to G O D the Judg of All, and to the Spirits of Juſt Men made perfect, and to Jeſus the Mediator of the New Covenant*, &c. Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24.

And how bleſſed muſt that Society be, which ſhall remain for ever free from all Pride and Vanity, all irregular Self-Love, all Fraud and Treachery, all Envy and Malice, all Diſcord and Contention, all Suſpicion and Jealouſy; and where Humility and Charity, Sincerity and Kindneſs, Peace and Harmony, mutual Confidence and Friendſhip ſhall reign for ever!

The Terms of natural and civil Relation, ſuch as thoſe of Brethren and Friends, Co-

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Heirs and Fellow-Citizens, ſufficiently indicate, that the Happineſs of Heaven will be ſocially enjoy'd: and this well agrees with the natural Propenſion we have to Converſation with others, as we have before obſerv'd. Nor will the Enjoyment of Communion with God hinder the Society of perfect Creatures from being both delightful and profitable to each other, any more than our Communion with him, in this imperfect State, interferes with the good Offices we render each other, either in the Civil or Religious Communities to which we appertain, and with the Advantage and Pleaſure we reap from thence.

Laſtly, This Happineſs is adapted to the Condition of Man, conſider'd as capable of Immortality, and deſign'd by the Author of his Being to ſubſiſt for ever: and therefore to render Men compleatly happy, they muſt be ſecur'd of the Continuance of the Happineſs they enjoy; otherwiſe the greater it is in Degree, the greater will be their Sollicitude and Fear, leſt they ſhould be depriv'd of it, if it be precarious and uncertain. Mankind deſire not only to be happy, but to be ſo for ever: and as it is the greateſt Aggravation of the Miſery of the Wicked in the future State, that they ſhall have no Reſt, but be tormented for ever and ever; ſo 'tis a mighty Inhancement to the Felicity of the Righteous, that it ſhall continue in an uninterrupted Courſe to Eternity. No Night ſhall draw a Veil over that bright and glorious Day, no Cloud ſhall intercept its Luſtre in the leaſt degree.

Tho the People of *Iſrael* enjoy'd Reſt and Peace in the Land of *Canaan* for a time, yet were they ſometimes invaded, and at other times led

Captive

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Captive into foreign Countries by their Enemies: But *the Reſt that remains to the People of God*, is perpetual in its Duration, being founded on an *everlaſting Covenant, order'd in all things, and ſure.* 2 Sam. 23. 5.

To Perſons, who by their Guilt have deſerv'd *everlaſting Deſtruction from the Preſence of the Lord, and the Glory of his Power*, a State of Indolence, or even freedom from great Pain and Torment, might be accounted a conſiderable Indulgence. What Words then can expreſs the Divine Mercy and Bounty, which have provided ſuch a State of Reſt and Happineſs, as we have been deſcribing, for thoſe who were once dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins, tho now *riſen to Newneſs of Life* by Jeſus Chriſt; for thoſe who once were *not his People*, tho now dignify'd with the Title of *the People of God!* That they might be happy in every Capacity, to the utmoſt Extent, and to all Eternity! What Love and Gratitude, what Sacrifices of Thankſgiving, what Acclamations of Praiſe, what Obedience ought to be offer'd for this unſpeakable Gift, both in Time and thro Eternity, by the Heirs of this Bliſs and Partners of this Glory, to Him who has call'd them to Glory and Vertue, and made them *Kings and Prieſts, to reign with Himſelf for ever!* 2 Theſſ. 1. 9. Rom. 9. 25.

2. 'Tis time we now particularly conſider the Character of the Perſons who ſhall enjoy this State of Eternal Reſt and Happineſs: They are *the People of God.* 'Tis for them, for them *only*, and for *all* of them, that this Glory is prepar'd and reſerv'd.

Not all who aſſume this Appellation ſhall participate this Happineſs; but thoſe who approve themſelves to be the People of God, by

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complying with the Terms of his Covenant: Thoſe who truly believe *ſhall enter into this Reſt*, while thoſe who only make an empty Profeſſion of the Truth, and *hold it in Unrighteouſneſs*, ſhall fall ſhort of it by their Unbelief; as the Carcaſes of thoſe *Iſraelites*, who call'd themſelves the People of God, and yet *dealt treacherouſly in his Covenant*, and provok'd him by their Unbelief, fell in the Wilderneſs. All the Judgments which *happen'd to them were for Examples*, and *are written for our Inſtruction, upon whom the Ends of the World are come.* Not all that call our Saviour *LORD, LORD*, ſhall be admitted to the Marriage-Supper of the Lamb; the Anſwer he makes to ſome of them, is, *Verily, I ſay unto you, I know you not.* With the Diſobedient he thus expoſtulates, *Why call ye me LORD, LORD, and do not the things which I ſay?* But *bleſſed are they who do his Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in thro the Gates into the City; for without are Dogs, and Sorcerers, and Whoremongers, and Murderers, and Idolaters, and whoſoever loves and makes a Lye.*

1 Cor. 10. 11.

Mat. 25. 11, 12.

Luke 6. 46.

Rev. 22. 14, 15.

We have before obſerv'd, that none but thoſe, to whom the Title of the People of God juſtly belongs, are capable of this Happineſs; none but they have a Temper of Soul, which *makes them meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*; none but they can reliſh the refin'd and pure Joys of Paradiſe, which are admirably adapted to the Deſires of their holy Souls, which have been ſo effectually attracted by the Grace of God, that (like the trembling Needle touch'd by the Loadſtone) they can find no Reſt, but in fixing on the beloved

Col. 1. 12.

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loved Object, that first gave them that powerful Impression.

And as none but the *People of God* shall enjoy this high Privilege, so not one of them shall be depriv'd of it; not one of the *Little Ones*, who believe in our blessed Saviour, will be neglected or overlook'd by him. He is the good Shepherd, who will lose none of the Sheep committed to his Charge: He can never *forget* his People, since *he has engraven them on the Palms of his Hands*, and their *Walls are continually before him.* He will not forget *their Work of Faith, and Labour of Love*; not so much as *a Cup of cold Water*, given to any one of his Disciples, *in the name of a Disciple*, shall *lose its Reward.* Isa. 49. 16. Heb. 6. 10. Mat. 10. 42.

3. Let us now, in the last Place, consider the Certainty of this Rest, intimated by its *Remaining* to the People of God. Even Natural Religion gives some Light into this matter, and shews, that *verily there is a Reward for the Righteous, verily there is a God who judges in the Earth.* But Divine Revelation gives a better Hope, a firmer Assurance, and a more explicit and particular Discovery of it. This glorious State of Rest is secur'd to the Righteous by the Divine Promise; by the Word, and by the Oath of that God, who is Truth it self, and for whom *'tis impossible to lye*, that we *might have strong Consolation, who have fled for Refuge to lay hold on the Hope set before us; which Hope we have as an Anchor of the Soul, both sure and stedfast, and which enters into that within the Veil; whither the Forerunner is for us enter'd; even Jesus, made a High Priest for ever, after the Order of* Melchisedec. What greater Assurance can we have of any thing than the Divine Promise? Psal. 58. 11. Heb. 6. 18, 19, 20.

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Since the Word of God is more ſtable than the Heavens and the Earth; theſe may fail, but his *Word abides for ever.* The Time will come,
2 Pet. 3. 10, 11. when *the Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great Noiſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent Heat,* when *the Earth alſo, and the Works that are therein, ſhall be burnt up. Nevertheleſs we,* according to his Promiſe, *look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, wherein dwells Righteouſneſs.* When the World ſhall be delug'd with Fire, as it was formerly with Water, the *New Jeruſalem* ſhall receive and ſecure the People of God, as the Ark did then the Family of righte-
Heb. 12. 27. ous *Noah.* Tho this *Earth and Heaven will be ſhaken,* there are things *that cannot be ſhaken,*
Ver. 28. but muſt *remain*; there's *a Kingdom that cannot be mov'd,* but will abide for ever.

Heb. 10. 20, 21, 22, 23. Since a *new and living way* is *conſecrated* for us, *thro the Veil of* our Saviour's *Fleſh,* and himſelf is eſtabliſh'd *a High Prieſt over the Houſe of God,* we may *draw near with a true Heart, in full Aſſurance of Faith*—And ought to *hold faſt the Profeſſion of our Faith without wavering,* ſeeing *he is faithful who hath promis'd.* Thoſe who believe have now Acceſs by Faith to the Throne of Chriſt in Heaven, and derive thoſe Graces and Favors thence, which are the Pledges of the future Glory they expect, when their Perſons ſhall take poſſeſſion of the Regions of Bliſs. In the mean time He lives and reigns there as their Head and Repreſentative, and will not fail to give them that Celeſtial Inheritance, which he purchas'd for them at the ineſtimable Price of his Blood, and by the Proſpect of which he encourages them to perſiſt in the ways of Truth and Holineſs, till they

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receive the End of their Faith, even the Salvation of their Souls. 1 Pet. 1. 9.

Add to this, that our bleſſed Redeemer aſcended to this glorious Place in the View of his Diſciples, and ſoon gave ample Proofs of the high Station he has there, and of his extenſive Authority over the Univerſe, by the Diſtribution of extraordinary and miraculous Gifts, as the firſt Fruits of that Glory, the Harveſt of which is hereafter to be expected; ſo that it would argue great Weakneſs and Ingratitude, ſo much as to doubt of the Certainty of this *Reſt which remains to the People of God.*

Thus have I diſpatch'd the ſeveral things I propos'd particularly to diſcourſe on, and now ſhall make a few Reflections upon the whole.

1. If ſuch a State of Reſt remains to the People of God, how much does it concern us to be of that happy Number, to be *written* [or enroll'd] *among the Living in* Jeruſalem, as the Prophet ſpeaks? Iſa. 4. 3. When the moſt haughty and pompous Titles, that diſtinguiſh ſome Men from their Fellow-Creatures in Civil Society, ſhall vaniſh and come to nothing; and when all Temporal Relation, with its Conſequences, ſhall ceaſe, and Men of high and low Degree, Kindred and Aliens, be reduc'd to one common Level; 'twill then be of the higheſt Conſequence to be number'd among the People of God, to be own'd for his Friends and Favourites, and to be counted among his Children, whom our Saviour will not be *aſham'd* to acknowledg for his *Brethren.* Heb. 2. 11.

How little ſoever this Title of *the People of God* is eſteem'd at preſent by thoſe who idolize the

the Honours of this World, an extraordinary Value will be put upon it by Men of all Degrees at the laſt Day: but a mere Pretence to this Character will not ſuffice at the General Judgment, as appears by our Saviour's Repreſentation of the Proceſs of that aweful Day.

Luke 13.25, 26, 27, 28. *When once*, ſays he, *the Maſter of the Houſe is riſen up, and hath ſhut to the Door, and ye begin to ſtand without, and to knock at the Door, ſaying, LORD, LORD, open to us; and he ſhall anſwer, and ſay to you, I know you not whence you are: Then ſhall you begin to ſay, We have eaten and drank in thy Preſence, and thou haſt taught in our Streets. But he ſhall ſay, I tell you, I know you not, whence you are; depart from me, all ye Workers of Iniquity: There ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth, when you ſhall ſee* Abraham, *and* Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, and you your ſelves thruſt out*, &c. 'Tis therefore of the utmoſt Conſequence that we have a juſt Claim to this Title. Nor is it difficult to know whether we are of the number of the People of God, if we will ſeriouſly enquire into the Matter: For, as has been ſhewn before, none may truly be ſo call'd but thoſe who believe the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, when 'tis expos'd to them; nor is it ſufficient to give Credit to it in a general and confus'd manner, but ſo as effectually to ingage us to embrace the Terms of Salvation propos'd in it. And a Faith of this kind will prove it ſelf genuine, by *bringing forth the Fruits of Righteouſneſs*; and will work by Love, which

Col. 3. 14. is *the Bond of Perfection*. To examine our ſelves ſtrictly on this Head, is neceſſary, leſt we fa-

Rev. 3. 1. tally deceive our ſelves with a *Name to live*, while

while *we are dead*; and with a *Form of Godlineſs*, while we *deny the Power of it*. 2 Tim. 3. 5.

2. How ſhould this diſengage the Affections of thoſe who find themſelves dignify'd with this Character, and with the Privileges belonging to it, from this World, and the things of it; and diſpoſe them to *ſeek the things which are Above, where Chriſt ſits at the right Hand of God!* How juſt is it that their Hearts ſhould be where their Treaſure is! Col. 3. 1, 2.

What is there to be found in this World, but Vanity and Vexation of Spirit? as the Wiſe-man has long ſince obſerv'd. What wonder then, if good Men, in this State of Pilgrimage, like the Dove that wander'd from the Ark, can find no Reſt for the Soles of their Feet?

If the ſame Inquiry were made after Reſt and Happineſs, as is repreſented in the Book of *Job*, to be made after Wiſdom and Underſtanding, the ſame Anſwer might be return'd: *Man knoweth not the Price thereof, neither is it found in the Land of the Living. The Depth ſaith, It is not in me; and the Sea ſaith, It is not in me: It can't be gotten for Gold, neither ſhall Silver be weigh'd for the Price of it; it cannot be valu'd with the Gold of Ophir, with the precious Onyx, or the Saphir,* &c. But *God underſtands the way thereof, and he knows the Place of it,* &c. Job 28. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. Ver. 23.

Let us not then ſeek Happineſs in this World, where it is not to be found; for why ſhould we ſeek the Living among the Dead? But let us turn our Eyes towards that Celeſtial Country where our Saviour reſides, and direct our Courſe towards that heavenly *Jeruſalem*, of which we profeſs to be Citizens.

3. The

3. The Proſpect of this State of eternal Reſt and Happineſs, may ſerve to comfort good Men under all the Afflictions and Sorrows that attend them in this World, and alſo to juſtify the Divine Government, in the unequal Diſtribution of Temporal Good and Evil in the preſent State of Things; which ſometimes has been ready to ſhock wiſe and pious Men. *As for me,* ſays the Pſalmiſt, *my Feet were almoſt gone, my Steps had well nigh ſlipt; for I was envious at the Fooliſh, when I ſaw the Proſperity of the Wicked.——They are not in Trouble as other Men, neither are they plagu'd like other Men,* &c. *Behold theſe are the Ungodly, who proſper in the World, they increaſe in Riches. Verily I have cleans'd my Heart in vain, and waſh'd my Hands in Innocence: For all the day long have I been plagu'd, and chaſten'd every morning.*

Pſal. 73. 2, 3. Ver. 5. Ver. 12, 13, 14.

When 'tis conſider'd, that the Joy and Pleaſure of wicked Men are but for a moment, mix'd with Trouble and Remorſe here, and will be follow'd with endleſs Torments in the future World; and that the many Troubles that ſometimes befal the beſt of Men, ſhall ſerve to purify and refine their Souls, and to prepare them for eternal Life and Glory, and to inhance their Reward, they may well be reconcil'd to the moſt ſevere Diſcipline of Divine Providence: *Their light Affliction, which is but for a moment, works for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory.* Tho they now *ſow in Tears, they ſhall reap in Joy: He that goes forth and weeps, bearing precious Seed, ſhall doubtleſs come again with rejoicing, bringing his Sheaves with him.*

2 Cor. 4. 17. Pſal. 126. 5, 6.

4. This

4. This ſhould fortify the Minds of good Men againſt the Terrors of Death. That which renders Death ſo very terrible, is the Guilt of our Souls; therefore the Apoſtle ſays, *The Sting of Death is Sin.* When 'tis conſider'd as the Effect and Puniſhment of Sin, and that which leads Men to the Tribunal of the Almighty, to receive an irreverſible Sentence according to their Works, it has a dreadful Aſpect indeed. But if this Sting be taken away, if our Conſciences are ſprinkled with *the Blood of* Chriſt, *which cleanſes from all Sin*, and we are reconcil'd to God by the Croſs of our Redeemer; if *being juſtify'd freely by his Grace, we have Peace with God*, we may look into the Valley of the Shadow of Death without fearing Evil, ſeeing 'tis to the Righteous the way to eternal Life and Glory. Death will deliver them from all the Fears and Dangers, the Cares and Troubles, the Sorrows and Pains to which they are liable at preſent, and give them an Entrance into that glorious Reſt which has been deſcrib'd to you; into thoſe calm and bright Regions, which are never ruffled by Storms and Tempeſts, nor ſully'd by Clouds and Darkneſs: Where Miſery and Pain can have no place, becauſe there's no room for Sin and Guilt; but where perfect Holineſs and perfect Happineſs ſhall keep equal pace to Eternity.

1 Cor. 15. 56.

1 John 1. 7.

The View of this Reſt has made many Chriſtians, who, on other occaſions, ſeem'd to have no great Courage or Preſence of Mind, triumph over the Grave, when they have found themſelves dropping into it.

It was this glorious Proſpect that ſupported the Soul of that Reverend Perſon, whoſe Death

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we ſo juſtly lament, and whoſe Life muſt needs render his Memory ever fragrant to us: It was this inſpir'd him with Patience and Submiſſion, Conſtancy and Joy, during a tedious Sickneſs, and at the very Article of Death.

And ſince there are divers things relating both to his Life and Death, that were very exemplary and edifying; I perſuade my ſelf it will be thought very ſeaſonable for me, now to give a brief Account of ſome Paſſages worthy to be remark'd in both.

That might juſtly be ſaid of him, which the
2 Tim. 3. 15. Apoſtle ſays of his Son *Timothy*, that *from a Child he knew the Holy Scriptures*, and that theſe *made him wiſe to Salvation, thro Faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus.* The great Delight he then had in hearing the joyful Sound of the Goſpel, made him frequent divers religious Aſſemblies, and that not without ſome hazard, at a time when they were often diſturb'd and interrupted, and ſometimes aſſaulted with Violence, while they were worſhipping God according to the Dictates of their Conſciences.

Some of the Sermons, which he heard in thoſe Aſſemblies, made a deep and laſting Impreſſion on his Mind; and his early Converſion to God was attended with an earneſt Deſire to be employ'd in the Work of the Miniſtry.

This Inclination grew ſo ſtrong and urgent, that nothing could diſſuade him from his Deſign, of ſerving God in this publick Capacity. To this purpoſe he apply'd himſelf to thoſe Studies, which he thought moſt conducive to the End he had in View; and that with ſo much Diligence and Succeſs, that in a little time

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time his *Profiting appear'd to all*, and at length he approv'd himself *a Workman, that needed not to be asham'd, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.* 2 Tim. 2. 15.

God, who inclin'd his Heart to this Work, and call'd him to it, had endow'd him with divers considerable Talents to prepare him for it. He had a solid Judgment as well as a lively Fancy, and Quickness of Thought as well as Facility of Expression. His strong and musical Voice, together with that agreeable mixture of Gravity and Sweetness, which reign'd in his Countenance, tended to make way for the Truths and Reasons he deliver'd, by awakening the Attention, and engaging the Affections of his Auditors. He taught with Clearness, and argu'd with Strength; exhorted with Vehemence, and reprov'd with a becoming Authority; and found the Art, which so few who speak in Publick attain, of blending Reason and Eloquence so happily together, that they mutually assisted and embelish'd each other, and equally adorn'd his Discourses; which were adapted at once to improve the Mind, and touch the Heart, and had something in them that was entertaining both to the Learned and Illiterate, both to the Polite, and less cultivated part of Mankind.

Tho what I now speak, can give but a faint Idea of his excellent Gifts to some of this Audience; yet I doubt not that it raises in the Minds of those, who were wont to hear him, a lively remembrance of the manner of his Preaching, and must needs make them reflect on the great Loss the Publick has sustain'd by his Death, at an Age that seem'd to give room to hope, that the World might have

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reap'd yet much more Advantage by his Labours.

His great Improvement, next to the Divine Bleſſing on his aſſiduous Studies, was owing partly to the generous Ambition he had to excel, which induc'd him to apply himſelf to cloſe Study and Meditation, leſt he ſhould produce any thing crude and undigeſted; partly to the prudent Choice he made in his younger days, to converſe with Men not only of Senſe and Learning, but of a polite Genius too; and partly to his great Modeſty, which gave him a continual Jealouſy of his own Performances, and ingag'd him frequently to ſubmit what he had compos'd, to the cenſure of thoſe Friends he thought capable of adviſing him; and to intreat them, with uncommon Importunity, not to ſuffer any Faults to eſcape their Remark, but to be free in advertiſing him of every thing that might ſeem to them either defective or redundant. And indeed he would be eaſily convinc'd of any Overſight or Miſtake, and gratefully acknowledg the Kindneſs of any one that pointed it out to him. Which ſhew'd this did not ariſe from a vain Affectation of Modeſty, but from his Humility, and the real Diffidence he had of himſelf. And indeed he deſerv'd the critical Severity of his Friends, in knowing how to value that ſort of Kindneſs, and in receiving the Hints and Intimations they gave him after ſo obliging a manner.

Nay, this humble and happy Temper adher'd to him even to the laſt; ſo that he could not be eaſy in publiſhing any thing to the World, without firſt conſulting ſome of his particular Friends. Which I the rather take notice of, to recommend to ſuch young Miniſters, as are preſent

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preſent in this Aſſembly, the imitation of ſo profitable an Example: for 'tis not to be doubted that they would find their Account in it, nay, that it would mightily contribute to their Improvement, to uſe the ſame Method; if they have but the good Senſe to expoſe their Compoſitions to Perſons capable of obſerving to them their Miſtakes, and have Humility enough to hearken to the Advice of thoſe who are able to inform them.

It was none of the leaſt of this excellent Man's Qualifications for the Miniſterial Work, that he knew how to *behave himſelf in the Church of GOD*, in regard of the Exerciſe of that Diſcipline which is ſo neceſſary to Chriſtian Societies. Many here preſent know, with what Patience and Meekneſs, with what Gravity and Prudence, with what Impartiality and Faithfulneſs he demean'd himſelf in this Congregation, and with what Prudence and Conduct he manag'd its Affairs upon all occaſions.

His good Will and Charity to Mankind in general, was conſpicuous in the indefatigable Labours he ſuſtain'd, in endeavouring to promote the Intereſt of their Souls. He often lamented the unreaſonable Differences among Chriſtians, and had a hearty Reſpect for all who held the Eſſentials of the Chriſtian Religion, tho of different Sentiments in matters of leſſer moment: And as he had a Mind too generous to be determin'd by the Opinion of others, without making a ſtrict Inquiry into the Reaſons of Things; ſo his Modeſty and Charity were too great, not to give all due Deference to thoſe who entertain'd Notions, which he could not ſee reaſon to embrace. And whereas he thought it his Duty frequently to expoſe the

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Errors of thoſe of the *Romiſh* Communion, in Terms of ſome Force and Warmth, he deſir'd it might be ſignify'd to the World, after his Deceaſe, that the Zeal and Fervour he ſhew'd on thoſe Occaſions, did not ariſe from a Diſaffection to any of their Perſons, but from the deep Senſe he had of the pernicious Tendency of their Errors, and from the ardent deſire he had to reclaim them from thoſe Deluſions, as well as to prevent others from falling into them.

He was not only ſerviceable to this Congregation, but uſeful to many others; and tho his Labours were chiefly beſtow'd on you, yet his
2 Cor. 8. 18. *Praiſe was in the Goſpel throughout* many other *Churches*, to whom he occaſionally preach'd, and whom he aſſiſted with his Advice in many Exigencies.

That Piety and Charity which adorn'd his Converſation in the time of his Health, ſeem'd to increaſe their Strength and Luſtre during his long Sickneſs; a Sickneſs which gradually weaken'd his Conſtitution, and at laſt grew ſtrong enough to diſſolve it. I can't forbear to think, that his extraordinary Labour in the Miniſterial Work, laid the foundation of his Sickneſs; for ſuch was the Fervency of his Spirit, that it often rais'd the Tone of his Voice to ſuch a pitch, as could not but exhauſt his Animal Spirits to a very great degree, and muſt needs, at length, bring great Weakneſs
John 5. 35. upon him. He was a *burning and a ſhining Light*, in which we rejoic'd for a Seaſon; but how ſoon is this Light extinguiſh'd! He was
2 Cor. 12. 15. *glad to ſpend and be ſpent* for you, for the Service of your Faith, and for the Furtherance of your Joy.

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I muſt not omit to take notice to you, how edifying his Converſation was in the time of his Sickneſs, and how difficult it was to reſtrain him from exhauſting the little Strength he had left, in giving ſerious Exhortations to thoſe who came to viſit him. Not content with this, he deſir'd many Perſons to be ſent for, whom either the Ties of Friendſhip and Acquaintance had endear'd to him, or whom he had obſerv'd to attend his Miniſtry, without knowing what Effect it had upon their Souls, or thoſe with whom he knew God had intruſted conſiderable Talents, that he might earneſtly recommend to them the Improvement of Time, in order to their eternal Felicity.

He obſerv'd to them, that Religion was a real thing, and of the greateſt Importance of all others; that they might well believe him to be in earneſt in what he ſaid, ſince he was going to die, and to give up his Accounts to God. He aſſur'd them, he had not *follow'd cunningly devis'd Fables*, nor preach'd for *filthy Lucre*; but that his *Rejoicing was in the Teſtimony of* his *Conſcience*, that *in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity* he had exercis'd his Miniſterial Function: That he had taught the *Truth as it is in Jeſus*, according to the beſt of his Judgment; and that he rely'd on the ſame Doctrine he had publiſh'd to others, for the Salvation of his own Soul. He preſs'd them with all the Earneſtneſs imaginable to conſult the Intereſt of their Souls, and to improve the ſeveral Advantages God had put into their hands for this purpoſe; and this in ſuch pathetick Language, and in ſo affecting a manner, that it could not but make an Impreſſion on all who were preſent, and drew abundance of Tears from their Eyes.

2 Pet. 1. 16.

2 Cor. 1. 12.

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Eyes. I would fain hope, a laſting Impreſſion is made on the Hearts, at leaſt of divers Perſons, to whom he particularly addreſs'd his dying words. God grant, that a Death which has coſt us ſo dear, and given us ſo acute a Sorrow, may be the occaſion of the ſpiritual Life of many Souls, and cauſe Joy both in Heaven and on Earth.

During the time of his tedious Illneſs, God was pleas'd highly to favour him, in continuing to him the Exerciſe of his Reaſon, and in viſiting him with the Light of his Countenance; ſo that it might be ſaid of him, as of the bleſſed Man deſcrib'd by the Pſalmiſt, *The Lord ſtrengthen'd him on the Bed of Languiſhing, and made all his Bed in his Sickneſs.* He was generally in a humble, patient and reſign'd Poſture of Mind, neither chuſing Life nor Death; or to uſe his own Expreſſion, *Neither aſham'd to live, nor afraid to die:* For he knew, that *whether he liv'd, he liv'd unto the LORD; and whether he dy'd, he dy'd unto the LORD; and that whether he liv'd or dy'd, he was the LORD's:* That *Chriſt would be magnify'd in him, whether by Life or by Death*; and therefore *to him to live was Chriſt, and to die was Gain.*

Pſal. 41. 3.

Rom. 14. 8.

Phil. 1. 20, 21.

So far as I, who convers'd intimately with him, could perceive, or have learn'd from others who attended him, his Faith and Hope were vigorous and lively; he had great Peace and Tranquillity in his Conſcience, and ſometimes Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory, eſpecially towards the Cloſe of his Days: for he ſeem'd to improve in the Heavenly Frame of his Mind, as he drew near the heavenly State; and a little before his Exit, declar'd that his Work in this World was finiſh'd; and that

now

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now he had nothing more to do, but to reſign his Soul into the Arms of his Redeemer; which he was heard to do juſt before he expir'd, ſaying, *Come Lord Jeſus! Come quickly!*

So liv'd and ſo dy'd this Eminent Servant of God, whoſe Memory is bleſſed, and will be precious in the account of all who knew the excellent Gifts and Abilities God was pleas'd to beſtow on him.

The Remembrance of theſe, and of the Vertues and Graces that ſhone in him, juſtly aggravate our Sorrow; and it would argue Stupidity, not to mourn on ſuch an occaſion as this. The Loſs of ſo well qualify'd a Miniſter, and of ſo faithful a Friend, may well afflict us deeply. Yet are we not to *mourn* as 1 Theſſ. 4. 13. thoſe *who have no hope*, becauſe we have reaſon to conclude that he is enter'd into everlaſting Reſt, and has gain'd infinitely by dying. It will be well, if the Grief occaſion'd by his Deceaſe become a godly Sorrow, by a juſt Aplication of our Thoughts to the Voice of God's Providence, which ſpeaks ſo loudly to us in this ſevere Affliction.

May you, who are Members of this Congregation, remember how he *watch'd over you in the Lord* for the ſpace of about Twenty Years, and how *he ceas'd not to warn you night and day* Acts 20. 31. *with Tears*; may you *follow* his *Faith*, *conſidering the End of* his *Converſation*. Ask Counſel Heb. 13. 7. by your Prayers, of the great *Shepherd and* 1 Pet. 2. 25. *Biſhop of your Souls* in all your Difficulties; reſign your ſelves to his Conduct, and beg earneſtly that he would give you another *Paſtor* Jer. 3. 15. *according to his own Heart*, who may *feed you with Knowledg and Underſtanding*. Remember particularly, the preſſing Exhortations your late

late Miniſter ſo often made you, to continue unanimous, and to cultivate Charity and brotherly Love among your ſelves; that God may ſtill extend the Wing of his Protection over you, and provide for the Neceſſities of your Souls; that he may *bleſs the Proviſion of his Houſe, and ſatisfy the Poor with Bread.* And conſtantly regard the bleſſed Hope which is ſet before you, that *Reſt which remains to the People of God. So run that ye may obtain*; ſo labour that ye may *enter into this Reſt*; that you may rejoice together with your Paſtor in the Day of the Lord, when the many Souls converted and edify'd by his Miniſtry, ſhall be his *Crown*, his *Glory*, and *Joy*; when he ſhall ſurrender his Charge to the Great Shepherd, ſaying, LORD here am I, *and the Children thou haſt given me.*

Pſal. 132. 15.

1 Cor. 9. 24.

Phil. 4. 1. 1 Theſſ. 2. 20.

All who knew the Value of this Great and Good Man, muſt needs partake of the common Sorrow which his Death has occaſion'd: But what words can expreſs the piercing Grief of one, who is left in the ſolitary State of Widowhood by ſo tender a Husband! and with what Compaſſion ſhould we addreſs our Prayers to *the Father of Mercies, and God of all Conſolation*, to ſupport her under this heavy Stroke, and to teach her a becoming Submiſſion to his Will in ſo trying a Caſe? A Caſe that calls loudly for our Commiſeration, and may well make her cry out with the ſaddeſt Accent of Sorrow, *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my Friends! for the Hand of God hath touch'd me.* Yet let not her ſorrowful Soul utterly refuſe to be comforted, ſince it ought to be accounted a Favour of Divine Providence, to have been related to ſo valuable a Perſon; and ſince it has

Job 19. 21.

pleas'd

pleas'd God, for the mitigation of her Trouble, to give her the Satisfaction of obſerving his Chriſtian Behaviour during his long Sickneſs, and of hearing ſo often the gracious Words that proceeded from him; ſo as to give her juſt reaſon to believe, his righteous Soul is now in a happy State, waiting for the Reſurrection of his Body, while ſhe has good Hope, thro Grace, in a little time, to enter by the ſame Steps, into that Reſt which he has already attain'd.

To conclude; Let us all account our ſelves Pilgrims and Strangers here, as the Patriarchs did; and as ſuch, let us *abſtain from worldly Luſts, which war againſt the Soul.* Let us make it appear that we are in queſt of a *better Country*, by withdrawing our Affections from this World, and fixing 'em *on the things above.* Let us keep the Eye of our Faith intent on that *Kingdom which can't be remov'd*; and let us be conſtantly doing our Lord's Will, that whenever he ſhall call us hence, being found ſo doing, we may enter into this State of Joy and *Reſt*, which *remains to the People of God*; *whither Chriſt, our Fore-runner, is* already *enter'd*, and into which he will receive all thoſe who *love and wait for his Appearance.* 1 Pet. 2. 11.

FINIS.

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